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THE

HISTORY OF RELIGION.

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A RATIONAL ACCOUNT

OF

THE TRUE RELIGION.

E-G-16
Vol II

BY

JOHN EVELYN,

AUTHOR OF "SYLVA," ETC.

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED,

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"Be ready always to give an answer to every man, that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."—I. PET., iii, 15.

"I am verily persuaded that errors shall not be imputed to them as sin, who use such measures of industry in finding Truth, as human prudence and ordinary discretion (their abilities and opportunities, their distractions and hindrances, and all other things considered) shall advise them to."—CHILLINGWORTH.

EDITED, WITH NOTES,

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Page 254, note; for "Bramwell" read Bramhall.
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THE

TRUE RELIGION.

CHAPTER VIII.

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SECTION I.

OF THE TRUE AND SUPERNATURAL RELIGION, DEDUCED FROM SCRIPTURE.

It is not sufficient what religion one be of, nor is it the Law of Nature, nor the command of the magistrate (according to the Hobbian system), which ought to determine our choice and obedience; but, as we have shown, what God has revealed in Holy Scriptures. For, without a peculiar grace, never could mankind have arrived to the knowledge of the True Religion, and the way to the worship of the True God, who was to be worshipped in spirit and in truth; but which all their reason and natural light, and sagacity in other things, enabled them only to grope after, as that igno-

rant inscription implied, though of the most learned Athenians; because it is altogether supernatural.

It is in this chapter, therefore, that we shall sufficiently make evident by Scripture (which we have abundantly asserted to be the Word of God), that there is indeed, and never was, but one True Religion, as we have shown there is but one God, who is the Creator, Upholder, and Restorer of all things. For God, though most wise, is not yet so fond as to be pleased with whatsoever is well meant, as with what He expressly commands and expects, for the great reward proposed. And therefore it is not so indifferent a thing what faith or religion men choose, so they be zealous in it, as some erroneously affirm. God, who esteems obedience better than sacrifice, will be served in His own, not in our way.

Indeed, Natural Religion goes a great way, convincing us that there is a God, and therefore to be worshipped, but it neither can, nor ever did, show how we should serve Him; never any man having known the mind of God, till He was Himself pleased to reveal it. And Porphyry has ingenuously confessed that no philosophy did ever yet find out how the Deity was to be propitiated. As to men's private spirits, which late or former fanatics have trusted to for their direction herein, nothing is more vain, more subject to delusion and mistake. For, though Almighty God did sometimes illuminate certain persons extraordinarily, it was usually accompanied with miraculous attestation as to extraordinary effects, still agreeable to His Holy Word. The Holy Scriptures, therefore, must be, and are, the

only safe and certain guide of our choice in that important affair. It is His Word alone which enlightens us to discover the way to walk in the midst of darkness; and one who seriously, humbly, and with an upright heart, applies himself to that Conductor, and, using the ordinary means to understand their meaning, by the rule we have set down, though he may possibly err in smaller matters, shall never miscarry in the most necessary. For it is altogether inconsistent with the goodness and piety of God, that one should fall into any dangerous mistake, who with those qualifications consults the Sacred Oracle, which imposes nothing of absolute necessity, but great and important doctrines of faith and sanctity, which are all perspicuously described there. Nor does the True Religion consist in any implicit belief, prescription, speculation, pomp, superstition, and gaudy shows, but in plain, easy, and sincere positions and rules, that are agreeable to reason, or, at least, not repugnant to it, though sometimes above it, and supernatural.

The True Religion is what is most ancient; we are therefore led to inquire for the good old way, and to walk therein.[1]

The True and Supernatural Religion, or Faith, delivered from Scripture, acquaints us, and requires us to believe, that the Great and Eternal God, exerting His Almighty power into act, did in time create Matter, (that is, a Chaos) *immediately* and simply, out of nothing pre-existent, by the sole virtue of His omnipotent fiat;

[1] Jer., vi., 16.

and *mediately*, out of that, was educed this aspectable world, or mundane system,—man, and all created beings,—to manifest His divine wisdom, power, goodness, and other attributes, diffused over his Creation, for His own glory,[1] and to the end we might serve and adore Him as our Benefactor and Supreme Good.

That, in a secondary relation, all this seems, in some part or other, and subordinately, to have been so made for the use and benefit of mankind; as food, clothing, refreshment, medicine, defence, and ornament; which, though He could have effected in an instant of time; and as some think did (especially the preparatory Matter, or Chaos, out of which emerged all that was made); yet did He it rather successively in six days, to teach us deliberation in all our rational undertakings. And this, first, by the spirit's incubation: whether meaning the third person in the Sacred Trinity, or any created spirit, spirit of nature, or, as some call it, *mundane spirit*, ordained by God to digest, inspire, and communicate a pregnant activity to the confused mass, we list not seriously to inquire. The earth emerged out of the water, and the obscurity which enwrapped it; and next the light, even before the sun, to show that it sprung not from that planet, or any other natural cause, but that light inaccessible. Secondly, the air, fire, or liquid ether, expanding the immense space, and separating the inferior waters from the superior clouds. Thirdly, the collection of the waters into their several channels, seas, springs, rivers, lakes, that the dry land might afford

[1] Ps., xix. 1.

stability and firmness to what was to grow out of and stand upon its bosom, as trees, plants, and vegetables, for the food and sustenance of both man and beast. On this day, it is reasonably concluded that He also created the glorious angels, those ministering spirits, sent forth to do His messages, and be our guardians.[1] Fourthly, the sun, moon, and stars, by which His glorious works were cherished, made conspicuous and visible. Fifthly, the fishes, fowls, reptiles, and insects furnished the waters and air to feed one another. Sixthly, the large cattle and savage brutes, to replenish the earth. And, lastly, man, to command, use, and govern, dress and cultivate all these, and contemplate and celebrate the works of the Creator, in praise and adoration.

Man, therefore, He especially created (having provided and furnished so plentifully for all his needs) by a more solemn consult of the Holy Trinity; infusing or insufflating (besides the animal and temporary life common with other creatures) a rational soul, capable of immortality, and by which he was qualified to understand, contemplate, and enjoy all the creatures subject to him. And, lastly, out of his rib, whilst in a profound sleep or ecstasy, the woman, Eve, was built, and given to be a companion meet for him, not finding, among all those other living creatures, any of them fitting to converse with him in all this abundance of other things.

Finally, upon the seventh day, that is, when God had desisted from all His operations, creations of various

[1] Coloss., i., 16.

species, He is said to *repose;* that is, to create no more; and to command us to rest from all our servile works and labours, in memory of His stupendous operations, and employ ourselves in contemplating and praising the Universal Maker.[1]

Man being therefore thus created, and, as God's vicegerent, to govern the rest, was placed in a most happy Paradise, under a most agreeable diversion of cultivating only his garden (for God would not have him idle, even in his most pleasant state), and, for acknowledging the Author of his felicity, was promised the long continuance of this happiness, even to a far better, upon an easy and very reasonable injunction of obedience to a slight prohibition, namely, that amidst all the variety and abundance, he should abstain from eating the fruit of a certain tree, under penalty of utterly losing not only the enjoyment of his present state and happiness, but of both his natural life and that of his immortal soul; the consequence whereof would be, the ruin of his whole posterity.

But so it was, that an innumerable host of those glorious and happy spirits, whom God had before created, proudly rebelling in Heaven against the Most Highest, their omnipotent Maker, were precipitated, for this insolence, from those blessed abodes, and now envying the happy condition of mankind, a leader of those wicked spirits transforming himself into

[1] Whether on this day was their more solemn worship or no, is not clear, till Moses' dispensation, but some day of the time they doubtless used for their more public devotion.

the shape of a serpent, or probably into some more lively creature, yet of a subtle and serpentine nature, tempted the man, by his more feeble inclination the woman, and, under a false appearance and suggestion (as if their Maker had forbidden them the eating of a fruit whose property it was to make them gods, and endow them with transcendent qualities like their Creator's), persuaded her to eat of the prohibited fatal tree; and she immediately her too fond husband.

But all these specious effects utterly failing,—the Covenant broken by which they enjoyed all these privileges and blessings,—this foul and ungrateful lapse cost them the loss of God's favour, ejection out of Paradise, and the felicity they enjoyed in that delicious abode. Thus became they obnoxious to death, sickness, and dissolution of body, their understandings weakened and abased in faults, losing withal his sovereignty with the principles of his moral rectitude, and much doubtless of the beauty and vigour of his body, —reparable, in part only, by much study, labour, and anxiety in a toilsome life, — his spiritual and immortal state, irrecoverably also lost, and, but by special grace and mercy, in a second Covenant recovered.

Besides all this, by the corruption and taint of sin, their descendants thereby universally became liable to the same condemnation, and all those evils the whole race of mankind has lain under ever since. For man, as the immediate work of God, must needs have come pure and immaculate out of His sacred hands. But

thus he shamefully fell, not without due warning or ability to have resisted all temptation, endowed, as he was, both with great understanding and liberty of election, which aggravated his fault.

Now, whether the Devil borrowed the painted and curiously-coloured serpent's organs, to insinuate this fatal exploit, or by whatever other means, so it was, that the pravity of their imagination, the effect of this transgression, corrupting the members of their own body, transfused the venom to their posterity, which, like a filthy leprosy, has ever since been lurking; and, becoming hereditary, has been propagated, and broken out in all manner of wickedness, forgetfulness of God, inclination to all evil, and irregular appetites. For the root being thus corrupted, the branches must needs be unsound, and the fruit as bad. The obligation and ingratitude of Adam, that first of men, was so much greater, inasmuch as he was created a person of such singular majesty, beauty, strength, and other abilities, and, next, (of all earthly creatures) in perfection to the Divine Intelligences,—in consummate fruition of all good suitable to his nature and constitution,—and, capable of continuance in his happy state, with power and dominion over all the world, over all his own faculties also, concredited to him by his bounteous Maker. He was, as we said, created with a clear and bright understanding, freedom of will, and, as the rest of God's creatures, perfectly good, but indeed not immutable, as left in the counsel of his own hands; and therefore the more obliged. Nor had the angels any higher perfection

as to liberty and in condition, as Justin Martyr tells us.[1]

The station wherein he was placed was a garden of delight, furnished with all that the eye or ear could wish, with absolute faculty of enjoying, of all this, whatever he pleased, one only tree excepted, for trial and probation of his obedience, dependency, and recognition, for all that infinite variety; and guarded by a severe and most deserved commination. Nor less than this could God have enjoined him, without discharging him entirely of all duty and allegiance whatsoever, and without rendering him wholly independent of his Maker and Benefactor; so as the trivialness of the thing commanded, as it made the law the most easy, so the infraction of it rendered the offence the greater.

There are who have wantonly presumed to think it severe, that for so small a matter man should be made so miserable. But these bold men do not consider the Majesty offended, the presumption and obligation of the creature offending, the command so easy, the disobedience so much greater; and therefore should no more censure the Almighty proceeding, than (as one says) one ignorant in mathematics, a world of things and truths he does not comprehend; but which yet are certain and indubitable. We can no more investigate and trace out these *arcana*, than we can the virtues of the magnet, and things beyond our understanding. And such are also even divers Articles of Faith, the

[1] Αὐτεξουσιον γὰρ καὶ τῶν ἀγγελῶν γένος, καὶ τὸ ἀνθρώπων ὁ Θεὸς ἐποίησεν.

Trinity, Incarnation, and Hypostatical Union—mysteries above our reasoning; but they are real, and such as we shall one day find to have been done, upon account of the greatest wisdom and justice.

This was not so much one single and trite commandment, but the only one remaining of the whole Decalogue, by which the Almighty could have proved their obedience. For as yet there was neither parent, relation, magistrate, nor neighbour to offend against; murder they could not do, but by killing themselves (which, indeed, they sadly did, and all their race too, in the event, but this not through wrath or vengeance.) They could not dishonour earthly parents, for they had none, nor break the Sabbath; for as yet it was not enjoined. Nor could they commit adultery, for there was but one wife and husband in the whole world; nor steal, since there was none to take from; nor bear false witness against a neighbour, who had none; nor, lastly, covet, who wanted nothing, who had already all the world. So that there seemed to remain this only trial of their obedience to express their gratitude and obsequiousness, through all the circle of God's commands; so that, whether out of infidelity, pride, ambition, or compliance with his wife, his fault was without excuse, and to the ruin of both soul and body. The soul, which is the form, and denominates the man, was in this transgression as well as the body; since, through its faculties, the inferior body was brought to yield in the first place.

Thus, all mankind being in the first man, as in the

stock and root, was liable to the same offence; having received that precious *depositum*, his soul, both for himself and all his posterity; and, consequently, what he lost, he also lost for them. The foundation being impure, the stream must needs be polluted, as a prodigal father impoverishes himself and unborn child, as a traitor to his Prince and Sovereign derives the taint to all his blood.

Thus, we have showed how Adam could not have sinned against any injunction in the whole Moral Law, save in this only instance, which was so great as rendered him guilty against both the Tables of it, in its fatal consequences. Whether it were concupiscence that first appeared, (after his tasting the forbidden fruit, of quality to provoke disorderly and immodest motions) or whatever else which they sought to covet, conscious of the guilt; the taint was so contagious as, had not God, of infinite mercy, taken pity, and a Saviour intervened, weakened and abandoned as Adam was, no flesh could have been saved; God's justice must have taken place, and condemned all. For though God, considered in His absolute power, could have pardoned the sin of man at first, yet, considered in that decree He made from all eternity to punish sin, and as a Governor, bound to maintain it, He was not to exercise that power; nor could any creature, angel, or man, reverse that decree, or satisfy Divine Justice. There was, therefore, something of infinitely greater value and qualification required to free man from the punishment of having offended against this Covenant of Works by

entering into a new one, upon new terms and upon renewed obedience, before His justice took place. And, accordingly, Almighty God, in pity to our frailty (and that man was not his own tempter, but falling by a malicious spirit), rescued him from this destruction, by entering into a second treaty, or covenant, not of works, like the first, but of faith and future holiness, in expectation and virtue of a champion;[1] who, proceeding from the woman, should bruise and break the cursed Serpent's head (wherein all his power and venom lay;) triumph over the deadly foe, be a Mediator and Saviour of him and all mankind, and thereby restore them and their obedient race to greater happiness than what they lost.[2]

This seems the method of God's *election;* for, though there be neither *prius* nor *posterius* in God's will, who sees and contemplates all things at once and together, as if already done (as to our weak and infirm capacity, who cannot conceive of actions but by time and succession), and did foreknow to what unhappy period man would come, by abusing his liberty and choice; He provided a sovereign panacea and remedy to restore His collapsed creatures. God did not decree man's fall, or so much as permit it in a strict sense, as allowing or tolerating it (for then it might carry some excuse perhaps), but so permit it only, as the prodigal father in the parable suffered his curious younger son to travel strange countries, and try, as it were, his fortune; the ill employment whereof was none of the father's fault,

[1] Gen. iii., 15. [2] John, iii., 15, 16.

or so much as any part of his will or purpose, much less His irreversible decree. Only it gave the father such an opportunity, as the Fall of Man did the Almighty, of showing mercy on him, and pitying his sad case; yea, and of meeting his returning and repenting child. God returns to man, offers him a Saviour, and a means of restitution, and entering into grace.

In the mean time, it is confessed that, supposing God had not created man in a capacity of attaining supernatural felicity (for man, at first, was only in a state of natural felicity, consisting in the fruition of this life, had he persisted in innocency), he might, notwithstanding, have created him in a state of immortality, though still in Paradise. The Tree of Life, which was also in the same garden, might, probably, have been propagated by both Adam and his posterity, wherever they came; making all the world, in time, a Paradise, where innocent people dwelt. This to preserve them in health and life (not as Josephus thinks, a very long time only), but for ever, even here, or till God should have translated them to a better world.

Nor does this opinion exclude any purpose of calling man to a place of supernatural grace, capacitating him for glory in heaven. And some there are who think that God proposed to exercise him first in this inferior state, and, finding him faithful and obedient on this probation, to have called him to a higher. And that this calling was to be by the Word of God, which, being afterwards incarnate, is our Lord Christ, who should have appeared in the flesh to perform this mercy, though

Adam had not lapsed. This is assigned for a reason why afterwards the Law given to Moses did stipulate only for the happiness of this life alone, though covertly, that those who obeyed that Law should be blessed with a more happy life; God intending to set on foot, in time, a treaty of evangelical righteousness by Christ, on terms of which that happiness should be obtained. And thus, proceeding by degrees, should man have been prepared for the Gospel and coming of Christ by the discipline of the Law; and as if God would hereby try how inveterate and great the disease was by the failing of the cure thereof by the Law, before the Grand Physician, as the Son of God, should come in person to perfect and do the cure.

But, to leave this supposition, for it is no more, and return to where we left. Till this fatal lapse of Adam, there was no faith required for justification but in God alone, His benignity and bounty. Yet faith there must be, seeing, without it, it is impossible to please God.[1] Nor could man love and obey one in whom he did not believe; and, before sin, there was neither needs of a Saviour or faith in Christ. But, after the Fall, man had another object of his faith, namely, the promised deliverance by the seed of the woman; and that God would certainly make good His word.

SECTION II.

OF THE PATRIARCHAL ANTEDILUVIAN RELIGION.

In this general faith Adam's and the antediluvian Patriarchs' penitent and religious posterity passed their

[1] Hebr., xi., 6.

time, without other extraordinary revelation that we read of, though they, doubtless, might have confirmation of it from time to time; such as Enoch, who walked with God, Noah, Melchisedeck, and other holy persons, till Abraham, to whom it was first declared, from whose loins this promise should be made good — in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed. But this was very obscurely discovered as yet, as sometimes by dreams and visions, till the postdiluvian and more prophetic days; and so with greater light and evidence, as the bright day-star of Jacob was approaching and ready to rise. For all the saints and holy men of old had but a general and very misty sight of Christ the Saviour, or, as one may say, of the Christian religion. The difference was, that their faith was of things to come and in expectance; ours of the present, past, and future. Thus was Christ promised to Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob; Moses, David, and all the prophets mentioned him, as we shall come to show in the chapter following.

Now, as to the exterior service, how early sacrifices were, both for Eucharist (before he sinned) and for expatiation afterwards, is apparent by that of Abel's and Cain's.[1] But, during the time of their standing in Paradise,[2] the religion, as is most natural, was eucharistical; was the praising and magnifying their Creator's works. Nor was Adam, doubtless, even after his Fall,

[1] De Civ. Dei, l. 10, c. 4. See St. Chrysost. Hom., 18 in Genes.

[2] Some think it was hardly a full day—at least, a very short time; but some more competent space may well be imagined, had it been but for the contemplation and naming of the creatures.

actually deprived of all his habitual knowledge, though his inclinations and appetites were so perverted that the truth which enlightened his mind took no effect on his actions no more than it still does upon all his posterity, till grace supervene; I say, though his soul was in this disorder, yet could he not so utterly forget the offence he had committed as not to see and bewail his condition, and might be taught that, there being no remission without shedding of blood, God would accept of a sacrifice of his own appointment, as He did that of Abel. But neither did he nor any of the Antediluvian Patriarchs offer any thing, save Holocausts and whole burnt-offerings for expiation; because, as yet, they were not to eat flesh, much less any part of their sacrifice; but feed on fruits and plants, till God gave permission to the sons of Noah, offering peace-offerings, of which part was burnt, and the rest eaten, with praise, festivity, and rejoicing, in token of God's being well pleased; as they did after their coming forth of the ark. The same service we also find continued afterwards by Abraham with invocations, prostration, and prayers, and, as some believe, in a public form; and that the Patriarchs, the school of Methusalem, taught men religion by way of preaching and persuading; not pretending that God spake to them before Moses.[1]

Then, as to the Sabbath—the memory of the creation,

[1] St. Peter says expressly that Noah preached to them whilst he was preparing the ark, which, if during the whole time of its fabric, was no less than a hundred years.

the sanctifying of it, was doubtless before the Mosaic Law; and, being of Divine institution, the seventh day from the creation, positively obliged all mankind, so that the very heathen honoured it.

The Jews, indeed, call this period *the age of emptiness*,[1] even to the promulgation of their Law, there being, as yet, no other than that of Nature—namely, those innate sentiments, and such other principles, as, even at first sight, exact assent. The Church, as yet, and the children of God, had not that only, but some positive laws also. Now, the natural law does not derive its force from any arbitrary power, constitution, or any external revelation, but from the moral and intrinsic virtue of the things themselves. And, yet, even this law is implanted and impressed by God, showing what is good, just, and profitable; what evil, dishonest, intolerable, and inconsistent with natural life and government. And this was the religion which prevailed for nearly 2,000 years, without any more sublime, unless we take in what we mentioned, and what the Jews assert, concerning the seven precepts of the sons of Noah. Six of these they pretend to have been derived from Adam himself and his descendants: namely, first, prohibition against strange worship, explained in the two first of the Decalogue—at least, something like them; secondly, about blessing, or, rather, not blaspheming the tremendous name of God; thirdly, against effusion of innocent blood, which was also renewed after the Flood; fourthly, against adultery and uncleanness

[1] M. Ben. Isr. De Resurrect., l. iii., c. 3.

ness; the fifth, forbidding theft; the sixth, concerning judges and magistrates, for the distribution of common justice; and, lastly, the prohibition against eating blood.

All these, holy Job,[1] who lived long ere Moses, does, in some places or other of his book, seem not obscurely to point out, the last only excepted, as forbidding all the cruelties, as human sacrifices and other barbarous rites, which the Heathen practised in their amphitheatres and spectacles; God Almighty having designed and set apart the blood of creatures, (as containing the spirituous part or life of the creature) for an instrument of expiation only, and for a type of what His Son was to shed. The rest of those ordinances being approved by Him, as seeming to be in the very texture and constitution of our nature, so that the Jews themselves (as much addicted to their rites as they were) made no scruple of receiving those moral Heathen as proselytes who observed them, without obliging them to their other ceremonies—no, not to *Circumcision* itself. Nor was more enjoined them at their reception afterwards into the Christian Church, besides baptism.

These seem, as it were, to have been imperial constitutions enjoined from their very first Father,[2] being good and profitable of their own nature, as without which mankind could not live and be safe. But they

[1] Job. i., 6; xxiv., 2, 3, 4; xxxi., 9, 10, 11, &c. See R. B. Maimon., c. 7.

[2] Πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ὁμοίως λυσιτελεστάτοι, καὶ πρὸς καλογαθίαν κοινὸν ἁπᾶσι.—Josephus.

had with these, upon extraordinary emergencies, some, though rarely, revelation by visions and dreams, and sometimes God's immediate voice, as that to Noah, Abraham, &c.; and the Covenant of Circumcision, after the Flood, and when God thought to select a more peculiar Church out of the rest of the depraved and more idolatrous world, in order to His great purpose of giving it a Saviour, the promised seed.

It is likewise affirmed, in this ante and postdiluvian religion, they were not to make matrimonial contracts with the impious and more wicked people of the nations; and, as to other matters of religion, men took care to instruct their children and domestics in the fear of God, as we see by the example of Abraham and his household, the father of the family being now both prince and priest, officiating with prayer and sacraments, (for such was Circumcision) with invocations and sacrifices. And that this was early, we have mentioned in that of Abel, &c. To these add external adoration and worship[1] of bowing the body, prostrations, &c.

As for oblations, Cain and Abel brought their firstlings as a dedicated present due to God, and they were, as we said, eucharistical and expiatory, naturally the *primitiæ* and product of His blessing on their honest labour, as they would have done in Paradise, for what they received without it. Till sin exposing them to the wrath of God, by the blood and death of some innocent creature, they acknowledged the position due to the offender, in whose stead it was offered and accepted.

[1] Gen., xviii., 2.

And this is more than probably, from some positive early institution, enjoined to Adam himself, whom, now sadly degenerated to animal life, we find, a little after the Fall, to be clad in skins of beasts, such as likely had been sacrificed; the flesh (as we have shown) was not then permitted to be eaten. They killed them, therefore, at first for these sacrifices only; the sign of their acceptance being fire from heaven descending to consume it. For doubt I but they had likewise places devoted and consecrated, or set apart for the more solemn service of God. For they had altars[1] in groves, high places, and silent recesses, separate from vulgar resorts, as more fitted to fix and compose their thoughts, though afterwards abased to idolatry and superstition, as by the ancient Druids, and others. And they had seasons more especially appointed for their sacred offices; which some think was on the Sabbath, though it be not so clearly made out, from any positive text, till the Mosaic Dispensation. However, doubtless, the place at Bethel, where Jacob anointed the column, and had his vision, and where Abraham before him more often sacrificed, as at Beersheba,[2] &c., might have been such places as were not afterwards profaned to common uses.

As to the person daily administering and directing the devotion, it was (as we said) the first-born, in whom the priesthood was invested from the beginning; and so, the eldest of the family or tribe, descending on him by right of inheritance. The rest derived from this

[1] Gen., viii., 20; xii., 7, 8; xiii., 4, 18. [2] Gen., xxi., 33.

first or high-priest, as families increased and were constrained to separate, and enlarge their dwellings. And so, even a younger son, either marrying or being separated into a family of his own, became also priest, as well as his elder brother; and so any child, though his grandfather was living, as it is apparent Shem, the patriarch, was even in the time of Abraham; and Abraham, though a younger brother, was priest in his family; and so, even Esau, till he sold his birthright, that is, as some think, his priesthood, and those garments Rebecca put on Jacob, his sacerdotal vestment; but it was still the primogenital right, till a family separated.

Thus we read of holy Job's offering sacrifices both for his children and relations, upon their feasting; and so it continued till the Levitical sacerdocy was fixed and confined to Aaron and his posterity. It was such an honour as made Jacob so desirous of the blessing which his elder brother Esau sold, and lost his right by despising it, as Reuben did afterwards, for his bold incest.[1]

In this religion and observance lived those Fathers both before and after the universal Cataclysm. From Adam it came to Seth, who is said to have been the inventor of letters, astronomy, and other useful arts, and (as is probable) separated his family from the wicked posterity and race of Cain. This was propagated to Enoch, in whose line religion was so public and famous, that his descendants were called, by way

[1] Gen., xlix., 3.

of eminence, *the Sons of God*, to distinguish them from the rest, (now multiplied and exceedingly profane) till, matching with their daughters[1]—a thing it seems prohibited, because these were idolaters, and conversing amongst them—they at length became also so degenerate, as moved God utterly to destroy all mankind from off the face of the earth, by an universal flood of waters.

Long was it yet that His patience waited for their reformation. For Cainan, Mahaleel, Jared, &c., in whose line the (until now) holy posterity, mingling with the vicious and profane Cainites, corrupted with their sensuality, there sprang up a race of giants, or men of extraordinary stature, insolent and cruel tyrants. Some few yet there were who forsook not the True God, among whom was holy Enoch, translated to a better world,[2] to show there was a reward for the righteous, and another state after this life. Methusalah, his son, the longest liver of mortal men, died not till the fatal year was come, which brought the Deluge on all flesh that had corrupted its way. This happened under his grandchild, Noah, the only righteous person then remaining in all the earth; so universally was the whole world depraved. He, finding grace and favour with God, was, with his three sons, his, and their wives, saved by the Ark (a figure of the Church.) This, having been preparing no less than 120 years before, gave time for repentance, which the holy architect of it ceased not to preach unto them, nor they to disregard

[1] Gen., vi., 3, 4.

[2] Gen., v., 24; Heb., xi., 8.

it, till on a sudden a dismal flood came and swept them all away.

SECTION III.

OF THE POSTDILUVIAN RELIGION, TILL THE MOSAIC LAW.

Noah and his family, which was all the visible Church now left in the whole world, was alone saved from destruction. A full year they continued in the floating vessel, when, being called forth by their merciful Preserver, the waters abated; and the earth now dry,[1] they erected an altar, worshipped and invoked God; by praises, prayer, and sacrifices appeasing His displeasure; so that He promises never more to destroy the world in that sort, but that revived nature should resume her wonted course, and proceed in her annual revolutions, as before. It was now also that Almighty God renewed to man his former title of sovereignty and dominion over the creatures, (the species of all animals belonging to the earth and air having been preserved in the Ark during the Flood) promulgating laws against murder, homicide, and cruelty, by which mankind had so lately incensed Him.

Of this holy patriarch's posterity were Shem, Ham, and Japhet, in whom their father (sensible of their reverence to him when overtaken with wine, the force whereof he had not before proved) predicted the vocation of the Gentiles, and consequently of the Messiah. These two sons, piously educated both by their father,

[1] Concerning the alteration of the earth by the Flood, see Dr. Burnet's *Theory*.

great-grandfather, grandfather, Lamech and Methusalah, who for many hundred of years conversed with Adam, had the less need of *written* laws or books to direct them, oral tradition being so freshly conveyed to them from the fountain. From hence the Church went on to Heber, in whose days (though himself a gracious person) idolatry began to spread exceedingly, propagated by their erecting images of their ancestors, through which the devil used to give responses.

From this, Heber was the original of the Jewish nation; Peleg succeeding him, a numerous rabble of profane men, who, combining under the conduct of the tyrant Nimrod, began to erect a tower of enormous height, thinking thereby to brave any future deluge or destruction by fire or water, making it also a citadel to protect their rapines and oppressions; till God, incensed at their foolish and bold attempt, so confounded their speech as, not being able any longer to understand each other, they were forced to desist from working, and, separating into several bands, became as many colonies.

Thus, roaming about those eastern countries, they peopled divers places, according as they happened to understand one another's jargon and confounded speech; for, till this judgment, all mankind were of one lip, Hebrew being the universal language. From some of these sprang the predecessor of the patriarch Abraham, whose parents, though of holy race, conversing with these idolaters, he was himself also tainted. Upon this, his second son, succeeding in the patriarchal line, namely, Abraham having been extraordinarily called by

God, left his father's house and idols, that he might entirely devote himself to His worship and service. And this he did to that height of affection and confidence in God, as readily and cheerfully to make him an immolation of that his only son, so miraculously born to him in his old age, and in whom both himself and all the world had the promise of the greatest blessing that could ever be bestowed. This generous action, and as miraculous a faith and hope, so pleased the Almighty, that, though He accepted the will for the deed, as he did also his abandoning his friends, country, estate, and all other secular interests, and his readily submitting, and that at his great age, to the painful covenant of Circumcision, (which God required as a federal character of distinction from the Heathen world[1]) that He not only prospered him in his person with health, riches, and all earthly felicity, but gave him richer promises of possessions to his seed and posterity for ever.

Thus in Abraham's family was virtue and religion professed, and with him the Covenant again renewed. He it was who so carefully trained his domestics in the true faith, and propagated it to his posterity.[2] So gracious was this holy and hospitable man with God, as frequently conversing with his Divine Majesty, he was honoured with the glorious title of the *Friend of God;* blessed with His promised protection, and that he should be the father of many princes and nations, and of a numerous progeny. This, the Divine promise, was

[1] Gen., xvii., 10. [2] Gen., xviii., 19.

confirmed by solemn oath, and ratified by that federal sacrament of Circumcision, by which his descendants became God's peculiar people.

Neither yet did Almighty God altogether abandon the rest of mankind, some among the Heathen, Job and his friends and children, especially Melchisedech, who was both a king and priest, and had doubtless holy and peaceable subjects under him. Some there are who think him Shem, who lived seventy years after the Patriarch's coming into Canaan. This is yet but conjecture. Whoever therefore this great person was, he was certainly a type (even amidst those nations) of the clerical and royal pristhood of Him who was both King, Priest, and Prophet,[1] the Lord Christ; and therefore neither his original nor end so much as mentioned, though it was superior to any of the Levitical priests succeeding him.

But to return to Abraham. The true worship of God, transferred from him to his religious son Isaac and grandson Jacob, descended to the twelve patriarchs. After the descent of Jacob and his sons into Egypt, called thither by Joseph, and living there in great prosperity till cruelly oppressed by another prince, who knew not that great favourite, (to show they were not to set up all their rest in this life only, nor yet that God was unmindful of His promise) they were after 420 long years of cruel servitude miraculously delivered, and brought into the land of Canaan. There, having extirpated, by the miraculous assistance of God, seven

[1] Heb., vii.

wicked and abominable nations, they flourished under a theocracy, governed by God Himself alone, not so much in form of a republic as a monarchy under his Vicegerent Moses, who was king in Jeshurun, and that by a code of positive laws and written ordinances. For the lives of men since the Flood being exceedingly abbreviated, it became now absolutely necessary that the saving knowledge of God should no longer be trusted to the tradition of short-lived people, but written and recorded in sacred books.

In this manner was primitive religion propagated among the holy race, and among some extraordinary persons in the Heathen world. We instanced the pious Job and friends; and doubtless more there were, examples of justice, temperance, charity, and the most signal patience that ever was, our Blessed Saviour only excepted. For, till now, was religion and the worship of God sincere, pure, simple, natural, and most agreeable to the notions and sentiments of honest minds, right and well consulted reason, as without which the world could not have subsisted. That this, therefore, might be kept up, and now no longer be obnoxious to those hitherto ambulatory interruptions of unsettled abodes, it pleased Almighty God to fix His Church, and select people, under a more steady dispensation of peculiar and positive laws and rites; of which in the Chapter following.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE JEWISH MOSAICAL LAW, RITUAL, AND TYPICAL RELIGION.

SECTION I. OF SACRIFICES AND HOLY SEASONS.
SECTION II. OF THE PRIESTLY FAMILY AND FUNCTIONS.
SECTION III. OF THE JEWISH SECTS.
SECTION IV. OF THE JEWISH DISCIPLINE AND ITS AUSTERITY.
SECTION V. OF THE TYPICAL CHARACTER OF THE JEWISH RELIGION.

SECTION I. OF SACRIFICES AND HOLY SEASONS.

The Church of God, being now become, from a private family, as it were, to a great and numerous nation, delivered from Egyptian slavery by a mighty Hand, from their oppression, and disciplined, by a tedious passage in the Wilderness, to the Land of Promise, where they were to settle, till the full accomplishment of the great promise of the Messiah, and to supply the now abbreviated lives of men subject to be corrupted by tradition, and running into superstition, Almighty God thought fit to give them written laws and ordinances, by which they were to govern themselves, and obey

those whom He should appoint over them. And this He did under the Mosaic Dispensation first, and then by preaching and ministry of Priests and Prophets, in nothing repugnant to, but asserting the laws of nature, which are eternal.

This He did, in tremendous circumstances, on Mount Sinai, promulgated by the voice of the Eternal God in the audience of the whole nation, namely, the Decalogue, or Moral Law, miraculously engraven on tablets of stone by their Divine Legislator. The rest (containing the Ritual, Ceremonial, Typical, Ecclesiastical, Municipal, Political), was that part of the worship and government delivered to Moses only, and by him recorded in writing. And this Digest, or Summary of their Moral Statute Law, contained the whole duty of man, as far as concerned the present capacity of that people; calculated (I say) to the state of things, in order to a future and more perfect and consummate.

There was nothing among these precepts but what seemed to be of absolute necessity, as to the moral part, for the universal benefit of mankind; that of the Sabbath only superadded, which, whether typical and ceremonial only, was necessary for the setting of some particular part of time for God's more solemn worship. Indeed, the observance of the seventh day had a peculiar respect to the Israelites, as a sign of the Covenants made with them, when they were delivered from the Egyptian bondage; since, in its own nature, it carried no obligation by any light of nature at least, as the other Commandments do, deduced from the reason of

the things. Justin Martyr[1] thinks that it enjoined the Jews especially, and with that strictness, as being a people naturally too worldly and intent upon gain, and consequently too severe to poor servants, cattle, &c.; being, as they were, a perverse nation, impatient of God's service, which would else have wholly been in danger of being neglected.[2] Nor was yet either this, or any other ceremonial, altogether external, without analogy and relation to something more internal and spiritual; such as circumcision enjoined to Abraham, which signified mortification of concupiscence; the Sabbath under Moses, for the contemplation and worship of the Creator. Neither of these were *ab initio;* for, according to Irenæus, "Abraham believed God without circumcision, and observance of the Sabbath." And therefore had it a peculiar regard to the Jews, and was of high value, as it was said to weigh against all the other Commandments. But it had also a further prospect, St. Augustine tells us. *Inter omnia dicem præcepta, solum ibi quod de Sabbato positum est, figuratè observandum præcipitur:*[3] as well as the rest of those Feasts in the Levitical Code. And this appears by their being absolutely abrogated by our Saviour.[4] All days are esteemed alike to Christians,[5] as grounded on a Law Divine, and therefore not at all affecting that Christian liberty. And, as it had no injunction till

[1] Dial. contr. Tryph.
[2] Isai., lviii., 3, 13.
[3] S. Aug., Ep. 119.
[4] Coloss., ii., 16, 17.
[5] Rom., xiv., 5.

Moses,[1] so after Christ it had as little, that is, no farther than, as it was thought, a fit occasion of reminding us of spiritual duties, of mercy and relaxation to those employed by us, and for religious meditation on the Works of God; but especially for our deliverance and redemption from the slavery of our sins and Satan, and, in a manner, our re-creation. These required some variation from secular business and distractions; that also those under our charge may have leisure to do the like; and for the works of charity to our servants, and mercy even to our very beasts.

Now, though there was no public office, that we read of, enjoined for public prayer and exhortation on the Jewish Sabbath, yet the very reason of the thing naturally led them to it, and accordingly they practised both in their Synagogue; nor were they ever reproved, but commended for it: which may be a document of our obedience to the reasonable injunction of our superiors in the like cases, and especially as to solemn times, places, and offices, as they who are set over us think necessary; not repugnant to, but highly advancing the worship and honour of God.

Proceed we next to Sacrifices, which, being very bloody, were ordained for the punishment and expiation of sin. And these had all their accomplishment in the sacrifice of Christ upon the bloody cross, as symbols and shadows of better things to come. These were holocausts, burnt-offerings, and trespass-offerings,

[1] Ἀπὸ Ἀβραὰμ ἤρξατο περιτομὴ, καὶ ἀπὸ Μωσέως Σάββατον. Justin Martyr.

for the expiation of the most heinous crimes; the rest for frailties, for peace and reconciliation, for mercies and benefits received, which were accordingly accompanied with prayers and praises; and these latter were of things inanimate, as fruits and products of the earth.

As to the other great Sacrament,[1] the *Passover*, it was to be a lamb without blemish, in annual memory, likewise, of their deliverance from Egypt, and more particularly God's remarkable sparing of their nation, when He smote the first-born there of their tyrants and subjects. It typified the benefit both which they were to receive by the passion of the Lamb of God, without spot, to be offered for all mankind; abolishing all the sacrifices of the law, which, without *this*, never could have freed us from the captivity and tyranny under sin and Satan.

The Jews, till fully possessed and settled in Canaan, from the pattern delivered to Moses in the Mount, had a Tabernacle, or ambulatory Temple; agreeable in all its divisions and furniture with that glorious structure of Solomon, in which, as a designed place, and on certain days, they were to worship God in public. In this was the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, or an interior, awful, and glorious closet, typifying Heaven itself. And in this was the Ark of the Covenant, as representing the Mediator of it. In this precious cabinet were kept the Tables of the Decalogue, written by the finger of God; the pot of manna, signifying the True Bread, which comes down from Heaven for the food of the Faithful,

[1] Of Circumcision we have already spoken.

till their entry into Heaven, the heavenly true Canaan and Land of Promise; the rod of Aaron, which budded, and figured the branch, which in the Messiah was to spring from the root of Jesse.[1] This Repository was covered with a Propitiatory, or Mercy-seat, shadowed with the wings of cherubim, regarding each other as importing the extraordinary care, power, and presence of God. From hence proceeded the Divine Oracles; the hovering angels prefiguring our Blessed Saviour's mediation. In this place did the High Priest alone enter, and that but once a year, with an extraordinary train of pomp and ceremonies, with the blood of sprinkling, and making atonement within the veil, as well to present the people's prayer on earth as to represent the intercession of Christ in Heaven, where He was first to enter, and is now making intercession for us. Next was the Sanctuary, or Holy Place,[2] furnished with the Table of Shew-bread, which was always to be fresh and daily renewed, figuring the Bread of Life and Word of God.

There was, likewise, the Golden Candlestick, with its seven branches, snuffers, and other instruments, representing Christ, the Light of the World, and his Seven Spirits of God.[3] And here was the Censer,

[1] Heb., ix., 4, &c.

[2] Note, that this furniture of the most Holy Place, together with the miraculously kindled fire always burning on the Great Altar, were wanting in the Second Temple, at least, at the death of Malachi, after whom no Prophet wrote, till the coming of Christ.

[3] Rev., iv., 5.

typifying also the merits and intercession of our Lord. On the Golden Altar were burnt incense and perfumes, morning and evening, showing Christ to be the True Altar,[1] who sanctifies all our devotions, and renders them acceptable. Into this part of the Tabernacle did the inferior priests enter, to perform the daily ministry, in trimming the lights, furnishing the table, &c.

A third enclosure of this noble tent was, with the Court before it, the place where the people came to offer their sacrifices and devotions. That of the daily unintermitted service was the oblation of the Lamb, morning and evening. This was called the continual burnt-offering, with flour, oil, and wine, which the revenues of the Temple maintained.

Here, also, on the Great Brazen Altar, on which the Sacred Fire was kindled from Heaven, and was always kept burning, denoting continual zeal, were consumed the holocausts, or sin-offerings, as likewise those of trespass. Also, the meat-offering of things inanimate and without life, as the fruits of the earth, &c. Peace-offerings, upon vows and the like occasions, in which the fat only being God's part, the rest was for the priest. Lastly, the Eucharistical, for praise and thanksgiving, which, being a free-will offering, might be a living creature, or productions of the earth. To mention only those other Oblations of Tenths, first-fruits and first-born, and for ceremonial impurities. For we have already spoken of the Paschal Lamb, which was to be an unblemished male, with whose

[1] Psal. cxli., 2.

blood the lintels of the door were sprinkled, as figuring the blood of the Lamb, which protects us from destruction. This lamb was bound, its throat cut, and then roasted whole, as foreshowing the barbarous usage and cruel pains our Saviour endured for us. None but those who were clean and were in covenant of circumcision, might eat. The salad was of bitter herbs, and with unleavened bread, intimating the purity and holiness of those who were to have benefit by Christ, and were prepared by repentance, and faithful resolution to go through all difficulty in his service, without the leaven of pride, malice, and hypocrisy; lastly, with their loins girt, staves in their hands, and in a travelling posture, as ready to follow our Saviour and Deliverer. So that there was not a tittle of the whole ceremonial law, but which (though for a time to them veiled under ritual clouds) had relation to something solid, which was afterwards revealed in substance, as having relation to the mystery of the Gospel, when all these figures and objections vanished.

To the outward court Solomon afterwards added a very large one for the proselyte Gentiles, who, believing in their gods, observing the precepts of the sons of Noah, came to worship; prefiguring the universal call of nations, who should one day be admitted among the true Israelites. Here was also the place where the Jews, who were accidentally polluted, might presume to come, till they were legally cleansed.

[1] I. Cor., v., 7, 8.

It is, therefore, to be noted, that before the other court were placed the lavers, wherein the priests and people also washed their hands and feet before they ministered, and went to offer, according to that of David:[1] "I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I compass thine altar." There were, likewise, in this court the corban and treasure.

Besides the Sabbaths (as we noted), they had several stated times, both annual and periodical, for more solemn services; for they had also their monthly at every moon, welcomed by sound of trumpets, in token of joy and thanks for their monthly blessings. The ordinary annual was the Paschal, on the fourteenth of March, or first month. Then that of weeks, or Pentecost, fifty days after the other, in memory of the Law given at Mount Sinai; and Eucharistical, for the harvest, about this season.

The third was that of *Tabernacles*, on the fifteenth of September, which lasted a week, in which they feasted and rejoiced under fresh and verdant arbours, calling to mind their sojourning in tents in their passage out of Egypt; and typifying the transitory and fading pilgrimage of our lives in these earthly tabernacles in our passage to the heavenly country.

On these three great solemnities were all the males obliged to appear at Jerusalem, the capital city, where was the Temple. Nor came they empty to do their homage to God, who dwelt there by His more special presence. The greater holy periods were the Sabbatical years, during which their land lay uncultivated;

[1] Psal. xxvi., 6.

not only that they might depend on God's Providence for their sustenance, but to typify the eternal Sabbath, more especially prefigured in the year of Jubilee, every fiftieth year. For at this period, all servants, debts, and mortgages being discharged, they reverted to their owners; shadowing out the state of the Gospel, when Christ was sent to preach good tidings to the meek, bind up the broken-hearted, preach liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prisons to them that were bound; in a word, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, &c.[1]

SECTION II.

OF THE PRIESTLY FAMILY AND FUNCTIONS.

The functions of the Holy Place were performed by consecrated persons of a particular tribe and family; amongst whom the High Priest, typifying Christ, was to offer for the people, as our Saviour, for the whole world; of which, at that time, they bare the figure. The business of the inferior orders (and whose garments and consecration differed much from the glorious High Priest's) was to pray and offer sacrifice, instruct and bless the congregation; to judge in cases of leprosy and other impurities. They themselves in ordination being chosen before the people, were washed, sprinkled, shaven, anointed, and initiated with sacrifice, and were afterwards paid tithes for maintenance.

Subordinate to these were the Levites, who assisted the Priests about the sacrifices, cleansing and ranging

[1] Isaia., lxi., 1, 2; Luke, iv., 16-19.

the several utensils; they took care of the several courts and apartments of the Temple, kept the watches by turns, sang hymns with musical instruments, &c.; thus, serving from the age of thirty to their fiftieth year, they were after that dispensed with and rewarded. Great and many were the qualifications of a High Priest above the Levites; for, as he was to be of the lineage of Aaron, so was he to be of a most comely entire person, as typifying that of Christ, in whom was no defect. It was the High Priest alone, who, upon all great emergencies, consulted the Holy Oracles, the Urim and Thummim.[1] What the first was is not easy to determine, some conjecturing it to have been a conspicuous shining or coruscation of so many letters (in the Pectoral, which the High Priest wore) one after another, which, being put together, composed the response of the inquiry; and that the universal belief of this continued till the destruction of the first Temple, is a very great evidence of that miracle to be true; others, that upon the putting on of this breast-plate, the holy man became inspired; others, again, that it was a small *Teraphim*, carved like a little genius of human form, inserted in some notch of the Pectoral, which, through the ministry of an angel, spake and gave answers. This is the opinion of many grave and learned divines, as the most probable, but of no sound proof, especially as to its puppet form; from the so universally prevailing manner of the Gentiles placing little images in their shrines and temples, whence they had oracular voices;

[1] Exod., xxviii., 30; Numb., xxvii., 21.

and, perhaps, to wean them from the Heathen impure rights, it might please God to indulge them with this *Teraphim*, as it was of so frequent use among other nations. For so that people, by God's permission, and to comply with their infant weakness, as it were, did sanctify and adopt divers of the Gentile rites to His service for a time;' as did afterwards the Christians also; several ceremonies of theirs remaining, though reformed, to our times. Thus, Maimonides acknowledges that God, abolishing the cult of Gentile idols, reduced it to His own service, of which see amply in our learned Spencer.[1]

But these extraordinary concessions, like that of circumcision, remaining some time after our blessed Saviour's Incarnation, lasted no longer than to the first Temple and the captivity. All which, together with the spirit of prophecy, and several excellent and rare privileges, expired by degrees, as they provoked God, and grew dissolute and unmindful of Him and His messengers, the Prophets, even to the Advent of Christ, in whom the true Prophetic spirit was revived, and given without measure, as we shall show in the following chapter.

In the mean time, it is by the Jews themselves confessed that, forty years before their Temple was destroyed, the scarlet ribbon, tied on the goats, grew no more white; which change was a sign of God's acceptance; the evening lamp was extinguished, though full

[1] [Dr. John Spencer, a very ingenious and learned divine and critic, born 1630; died 1695. His greatest and most famous work is "De Legibus Hebræorum Ritualibus et earum rationibus."]

of oil; and the gates of their Temple opened spontaneously; and what happened to the Partition-wall is recorded, when their sacrifices also began to fail.

But to proceed a little farther with their constitutions. Sundry and most burdensome were the laws about meats and drinks, clean and unclean animals, their apparel, trial of jealousy concerning wives and husbands, slaves, servants, masters, contracts, possessions, magistrates, punishments, witches, impostors, blasphemy, perjury, murder, manslaughter, most of them judicial and political, calculated for that people and country, and therefore determinable with them.

We might add as to places of worship; their Synagogues, or parochial meeting-places, as it were, as also schools and colleges in their several cities. In the Synagogues, the Priests and Levites preached to, and taught the people. In the schools, the Doctors and Masters read their lecture, as in Universities. These seem to have been first erected and instituted by Samuel, and in these was Elisha president, as before him his tutor Elias.[1] Their pupils were called sons of the Prophets. Those who were extraordinarily called to be Prophets, were so upon very extraordinary occasions; as was Amos, the son of a herdsman.

Now, the office of the Prophets was, not only to reclaim the people from idolatry, but (as we said) to instruct them; wherein consisted that civil and outward observation of the laws, which promised a temporal reward, as the spiritual and inward obedience to God, which

[1] II. Kings, vi., 1.

might have given them a title to the happiness of the world to come. In this respect, some of the later Prophets were preparatory of the Evangelical doctrine, knowing the great consent and harmony between the two Covenants of the Law and of the Gospel. Indeed, they had but very misty as well as mystical notions of the other life, under the Mosaical dispensation, till Christ.[1] The Elders and superior Judges of Israel, Prophets, and Teachers of several ages, of whom we read,[2] being acquainted with the mystery, were yet to acquaint the people but sparingly and by degrees, as God, in His secret wisdom, appointed. For by the Law and Covenant between God and Israel, by the mediation of Moses, was the Land of Promise given them, on condition of embracing those ordinances. Yet that the life to come was a reward also to those who obeyed the Law, is manifest by that of our Blessed Saviour.[3] "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," namely, the Moral Law, as containing all the duties of Christianity; for, doubtless, the immortality of the soul and retributions after death were not altogether hidden from them, even before the very Law was promulged. How should otherwise the holy Patriarchs be saved? It being evident by Scripture that the same conversation, which was preached by Christ and His Apostles, was extant and conspicuous in their lives and conversations before the Law of Moses. So were the Fathers of the Church wont to convince the Jews that, even

[1] II. Cor., iii., 13, 14, 15. [2] Heb., xi. [3] Matt., xix., 17.

amongst *them*, Christianity was more ancient than Judaism.[1]

Christ came to make a new Covenant, and to show that He was the consummation of the old, and all its types. In a word, why should all these excellent persons, enumerated by the author of the Hebrews, have suffered such things, if they had promises of this life's enjoyments only, which was to end with the lives they should fling away? Daniel, and Job, and Isaiah, and Ezekiel, show their confidence of a Resurrection;[2] and David's seeing the unrighteous in such affluence and prosperity in this life, argues a better and more happy life to come;[3] though these were secrets, and applied, for the most part, to their being delivered out of worldly calamities. The better and clearer hope of the world to come was reserved for the coming of Christ. And, accordingly, Moses's Tabernacle was, therefore, called a worldly sanctuary only, as a copy of that to be erected and revealed in the fulness of time.[4]

But to proceed. In this state continued the Jewish typical religion, from Moses to David and Solomon (when it was in its height of purity and prosperity), the most splendid type of both the king and kingdom of peace; till Solomon, in his latter days, and afterwards his posterity, defecting, and stopping their ears at the

[1] See Eusebius, De Demonstrat. Evang., l. i.

[2] Dan., xii., 2; Job, xix., 25; Isai., xxvi., 19; Ezek., xxxiii.

[3] Psalm lxxiii.

[4] See in Hebrews, viii., how all this is shown to typify Christ, the Gospel dispensation, and the celestial Canaan.

message God frequently sent them by His Prophets to reform them, He was at last provoked to deliver, first, the Ten Tribes to captivity, who never returned more, and after them, the incorrigible two remaining. These, after the demolition of their glorious Temple and Holy City, (typifying the body of Christ, which should be destroyed, rise, and be re-built again) were restored after a captivity of seventy years, interpreted by Daniel seventy weeks, to signify 490 years, at which period was prophesied the advent of the expected Messiah, which should put an end to the Levitical and Mosaic rites, and introduce a law of everlasting righteousness, and restore the true freedom of the whole world from the Satanical captivity, as it exactly fell out. Observable here was the conduct of Alexander the Great to Jaddeus, the High Priest; and that one of the Ptolemies, after his conquest over Syria, should sacrifice at Jerusalem, and acknowledge that God, when, as yet, the Jews remained in captivity; and that Augustus should send annual oblations; so that it wore out all the religions in the world, save the Christian only.

At the return of the first captivity from Babylon was erected, as we said, the second temple, in this more glorious than the first, not indeed as to outward pomp and show, or costly materials, but inward sanctity, splendour, and glory, inasmuch as the Lord of Glory Himself vouchsafed His presence in it, according as was predicted. But when, after this honour done to the Jewish nation and temple, they corrupted themselves more than their forefathers, profaning the holy

place, and grown exceedingly dissolute, full of pride, covetousness, and all manner of vice and hypocrisy, and the high priesthood interrupted, their liberties were first invaded, the whole government was subverted, first by Antiochus Epiphanes, then by Pompey, Crassus, and others, the first of these tyrants having cruelly persecuted and outraged the nation, thrust out Onias, the high-priest, substituting his impious brother Jason, when Matthias, a priest of the Asmonean family, stood up to vindicate his country with all his sons, the brave Judas Maccabæus and the rest. Till subsequently the subtle Herod, flattering Augustus and bribing the Roman Senate, obtained the sovereignty of those countries, wholly abrogating the Asmonean family, and promoting to the office strangers for seven or eight successors unto Joager, under whose pontificate was born the only true high-priest of our profession, the LORD JESUS. Seventy years after this, the nation and people still waxing worse and worse, the wrath of God, not forgetting the sins and provocations of their wicked ancestors, who murdered Zacharias the son of Jehoiada, and conspired against Jeremiah, persecuted Micaiah, Elias, and others,[1] was poured forth on them to the utmost.

Herod indeed, to ingratiate himself with the people, pulling quite down the decayed old fabric, built a sumptuous pile at great charge; but withal, to flatter his patrons, he set up a vast eagle of gold (the ensign of the Romans) over the principal entrance of that

[1] Luke, xiii., 34.

holy place, expressly against the law, which prohibited all sorts of images. And so he maintained it, till, being on his death-bed, the tumultuous people pulled it down. And now this sacred enclosure was turned into an exchange full of shops of bankers and usurers, and profaned into a den of thieves; rites of mere human invention were substituted in place of the Divine worship; the priesthood was sold to strange, ignorant, and vicious men, all things degenerating into corruption of manner, doctrine, tyranny, and parties.

SECTION III. OF THE JEWISH SECTS.

The Scribes and Pharisees, Essenes, Herodians, Zealots, and other sects and enthusiasts, had put false glosses on the law, teaching the people that it required only formal and external righteousness, palliating all manner of crimes, oppression, malice, disobedience to parents, adultery of the heart, and speculative lusts, rigorous and revengeful retaliation of injuries, abuse of oaths, furious passions, under pretence of zeal, and the like.

They preferred oral tradition (as we know who have done since among Christians) before the written Word. This they pretend to have been delivered to Moses in the Mount, as explanatory of the Decalogue, and transmitted from father to son, by word of mouth, for many generations, to the priests, prophets, people, even to the Great Synagogue; and from them till after their destruction and excision, and a long while after, when, about the reign of Antoninus, they were collected and

committed to writing, for the use of the dispersed, by Rabbi Jeruda, in his *Mishnaioth*, or Book of *Repetitions*. This again was commented on by the Rabbins of Babylon, with innumerable cases and controversies, with a word of truth added, and the resolutions compiled in the *Gemarah*, a work comprehending the whole body of the Babylonish Talmud, which they extol even to blasphemy, and affirm the study of it to be more necessary than Scripture itself, which they extremely vilify, in comparison of the *Mishna* and their doctors' expositions. How this corruption was improved in our Blessed Saviour's time, we are told by St. Matthew and St. Mark,[1] in whose time all God's worship was turned into external and hypocritical forms of godliness, boastings, and outward cleansings, whilst they were, within, full of all manner of wickedness. Scrupulously nice were they of little things, and lightly passed by the greater duties. So a child pretending he had devoted his estate to some holy use, might be excused, though his parents starved for want of relief; the *Corban* vow, or, as it was named, vow of Interdict, whether they performed it or not, was enough to justify them (as they held) from doing their duty to parents, or neighbours the least kindness.[2]

1. THE PHARISEES.

These and the like were the doctrines and supra-additions of the Scribes and Pharisees,[3] or, as this name imports, the Separatists (a sect springing up about the

[1] Matt., xv., 7; Mark, vii., 2, 3, 7. [2] Mark, vii., 11.
[3] See Joseph. Antiq. Jud., l. xviii. De Bello Jud., l. ii.

time of the Maccabees). The latter, for their seeming zeal and strictness, obtained a wonderful veneration amongst the ignorant, while there was not upon the whole earth a more haughty, oppressive, malicious, seditious, sour, peevish, and unmerciful sort of men, yet pretendingly zealous of the traditions of the Fathers. And though they held both spirits and the immortality of the soul, or rather the transmigration of the pious, the rest they condemned to subterranean caverns; and that all were under a fatal necessity, yet had liberty of will.

2. THE SADDUCEES.

Opposite to these was the other sect, the *Sadducees*, who held neither spirits nor angels, nor survivance of the soul—a sect appearing almost 300 years before our Lord's Nativity; a dissolute sort of men agreeably to their principles, which yet from their first institutor, one Antigonus, are reported to have been very good. They held that God was to be served by us, His creatures, ingenuously, and for His own perfection's sake, though there were neither future reward nor punishment. This last part being mis-stated by two of His choice disciples, as if there was nothing after this life, was the original of all those false and sensual consequences which followed, without dependence upon any Divine Providence. For, with the Epicureans, they believed the actions of men to be below the inspection of the Almighty, that He took no notice of this inferior world. In sum, they were a sort of Atheists, though very formal, and pretending to much

justice, keeping themselves to the letter of the law, rejecting traditions, and so far not to be blamed, had all things else been answerable. There were not such swarms as these as of the other, it being for the most part spread among the gentlemen, courtiers, and great persons of the nation, as giving most liberty to looseness and pleasure, which made them fond of peace and quiet, that they might enjoy the world.

3. THE KARAANS.

There was yet a more moderate sect of these, called the *Karaans*, who rejected all their extravagant fancies and errors, adhering to Scripture, as the rule, and rejecting all the glosses of the Talmudists, so as not so much as to admit the points to the Hebrew Bible, as counting them parts of oral traditions. And this sect is frequent in the Levant to this day.

4. ESSENES.

About the same period sprang up another more philosophic sect, that of the *Essenes*, who, being driven into deserts and solitary places, about the persecution under Antiochus, ever after affected those recesses, casting themselves into societies, and leading contemplative lives in celibacy, of ascetic diet, living on the culture of herbs and fruits in common.[1] They revered the Temple, but seldom or never came near it, keeping to their own rites and ceremonies. Their doctrine was very enigmatical, contemplative, and sublime, but they were of

[1] See Plin. Nat. Hist., l. v., c. 17.

very moral, innocent, and innocuous lives,[1] especially those of Egypt, so excellently described by Philo, that Eusebius thinks them to have been Christians of St. Mark's conversion; but this is doubted. They were great fasters, and given to high speculations, as, amongst other things, the names and mysteries of angels, though men of exceeding modesty and humility as to outward behaviour. This makes some think St. Paul had reflections upon this sect,[2] where he perstringes the adoration of those spirits and the superstitious niceties of this society, *Touch not, taste not, handle not,* &c.; this austere institution prohibiting divers meats and things more strictly than other sects.

5. HERODIANS.

There remain the *Herodians*, whom some think to have been but a part of that tyrant's guard, or other of his courtiers, who, to ingratiate themselves with him, affirmed Herod to be the long and now expected Messiah; for, indeed, they seem to have been courtiers, who egregiously flattered him with this high title. Mighty active they were to promote his magnificence, by exacting tribute to *Cæsar*.[3] By such their master maintained his credit at Rome; for being an usurper in Judæa, as he had obtained the government by their power, so he was to procure the continuance of his patron's favour. They were (it seems) Sadducees as to their opinions, though styled by the Evangelists[4] *the*

[1] Joseph. Antiq., l. xviii., c. 2.
[2] Col., ii., 18-21.
[3] Matt., xxii., 16.
[4] Matt., xvi., 6.

leaven of Herod; those Sadducean principles being most accommodated to his intent, who, as we said, was but an usurper.

6. SAMARITANS.

What the Samaritans were, the story tells us to have been the descendants of those who were sent back from the captivity of the Ten Tribes, being a mixture of Jews and Heathen, to people the wasted country about that city. They embraced the Five Books of Moses only, and worshipped at Mount Gerizim; were averse to strangers, and nicely affecting outward purity.

7. ZEALOTS.

Lastly, the *Zealots,* a kind of fifth monarchists, a most fierce and truculent sect, (as described by Josephus to the life) who, under pretence of extraordinary zeal for the law, perpetrated most astonishing barbarities, and these with the rest became at last so insolent and rebellious, as provoked the Romans to repress their sedition, abolishing their great Sanhedrim and Council. They put the Temple under tribute and a garrison, repealed many of their laws and privileges, and stripped them of their authority, that they had no power in capital offences. Under these animadversions still continuing mutinous, their intestine confusions brought the Roman armies to invest their city, and to lay both it and their glorious Temple in ashes, after an obstinate resistance; and such a siege, as for the calamities brought upon them by their divisions within it, the history of no age has recorded anything so astonishing. There

were no less than eleven hundred thousand Jews who perished in the city by famine and pestilence, such as was never heard of since the Creation, the several sects falling out within the city, and murdering one another; ninety-seven thousands were slain, thirty were sold for a trifling piece of money; they crucified so many, that there were not trees enough to nail them to; and seven hundred thousands were put to death afterwards in Egypt, by an edict of the Emperor Adrian, forbidding any of that nation, on pain of death, so much as to presume to look towards Jerusalem, their fondling and desired city, which was now razed to the ground, not one stone left upon another, according to our Blessed Lord's prediction. And when it was attempted to be rebuilt, fire issued from the earth and overthrew the foundations, as Ammianus Marcellinus, a Pagan himself, reports.

In a word, the whole nation was so dispersed and scattered, as they could never since unite, but have been as vagabonds over all countries, a curse and execration for almost seventeen hundred years, without one portion of land, without laws, prince, people, temple, altar, or God in the world, to regard them; the like never having happened to any race of mankind from the beginning of the Creation to this day. So that now was the Sceptre, according to Jacob's prophecy, departed indeed from Judah, and the Lawgiver from between his feet; the Sacrifice and Oblation ceasing, as was foretold by Daniel, the Messiah, the great Sacrifice, being cut off, who came to finish and make an end of trans-

gression, reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in the everlasting righteousness of the Gospel.[1]

Thus, for the murder of their Redeemer, and aversion to his doctrine, which would have reformed them from their hypocrisy and wickedness, were they brought to ruin, their holy city trodden under foot of the Gentiles, and so still remains, whilst the city of God is built up in its stead, not in Jerusalem, but in all places where the Gospel is spread, because its builder and master is God—not with hands, but to be eternal in the Heavens.

SECTION IV.

OF THE JEWISH DISCIPLINE, AND ITS AUSTERITY.

Thus have we shown the imperfection of the Jewish and Mosaic religion; that it consisted chiefly in rites and ceremonies,[2] which, being typical only, were therefore never intended to be of perpetual obligation. For it would doubtless then have been as universal and general, as it was particular and national, calculated for the Jews only, and hardly so much as known and taken notice of by any, till the conquests of the great Alexander, they living in a remote, narrow, and obscure corner of the world, who neither married, traded, nor conversed out of their own country, but among themselves; so that they were severed from the rest of mankind, as by a wall of partition; and had (as we have

[1] Dan., ix., 24-26. [2] Gal., iii., 21.

shown) divers laws quite different from other nations, and that by a particular pact and covenant struck between God and them; fitted to their morose, harsh, surly, and perverse dispositions; for which reason God, perhaps, did not think those laws so fit for the rest of mankind.[1] These constitutions chiefly concerned the outward observance;[2] and, accordingly, the reward consisted in the affluence of terrene things: higher matters were out of their ken as yet.

They believed such as were afflicted with any calamity to be enemies of God, smitten by Him and in His disfavour; nay, esteemed them as accursed. And thus riches and outward prosperity were marks of piety, and so necessary, that one could never be a prophet, or dignified with that sublime calling, unless he were opulent: and that a religious man must needs be happy in this life. This opinion was so rooted in them, that our Blessed Saviour, coming in those mean circumstances, was a scandal and offence to them who looked for the Messiah to appear in all worldly pomp and greatness; such as never potentate had the like.[3]

The moral virtues and precepts of humanity, laws more proportionable to the dignity of man's nature, were but sparingly taught among them. Their jealousy, use of polygamy, inhospitableness to those who were not of their religion, and other rigorous ordinances—some permitted for the hardness of their hearts—made

[1] Moses novos ritus contrariosque cæteris mortalibus indidit. Tacitus, l. iv., and so Juvenal, Sat. xiv.

[2] Gal., iv., 9.

[3] See Grotius, De jure Belli et pacis, l. xi., 9, 15.

them strangers to charity, chastity, forgiveness of injuries, &c.; as they themselves had no pardon for presumptuous sins, their law a dead letter, and their rewards but temporal, were unapt to produce that unsinning obedience required under the Gospel. Besides that, the soul's immortality was so obscurely hinted to them, that the very Heathen round about them, especially the learned, seemed to have had more clear notions of it by the light of nature only. Neither does this detract from the wisdom and goodness of God, who best knows His time, and does by degrees, and as seems to Him good, manifest His holy will. To see the sun at once, without a twilight, oppresses the organ. God proceeds by little and little, as we are able to bear and receive. This nation were a reproachfully slothful, dull, untractable, stiff-necked people, and therefore to be curbed only by rigorous methods. Wherefore, upon occasions extraordinary, He raised prophets among them, who taught them how little God delighted in ceremonies and operose worship, with obedience, which was better than sacrifice and the fat of rams. He also encouraged them with promises of mercy, upon their repentance and turning to Him with their hearts. But this was rarely, and still by degrees, which showed He had some farther and more sublime intentions to be revealed in time to others, as well as to themselves; and therefore, as the Apostle [1] shows, it did not become them to pride themselves in their boasted peculiarity. The whole Bible of the Old Testament describes their

[1] Rom., ii.

prodigious wealth, idolatry, superstition, and other wickedness;[1] and we see, by sad consequence, that all those denunciations of Prophets, miracles done among them, captivity, plagues, and other judgments, made little impression on them; they still grew worse and worse, even to the crucifying of Him who came to save them; so that God was provoked to reject them altogether. For, since the law made nothing partial, nor with all its rigour was able to bring men to Him, it was necessary to introduce a more consummate righteousness, an Evangelical and easy law. And that it was His holy purpose to demolish the partition-wall we have argument from Malachi, iii., 1, 3, by raising up a nobler Prophet and greater Legislator than Moses; and make a new and more gracious Covenant, to supply the defects of the first; another priesthood,[2] &c., by which He should gather all nations,[3] yea, create new Heavens;[4] and send His own Son to effect and accomplish all these glorious things,[5] as we see it came to pass, verifying the unprofitableness and weakness of the former disciplization.

And thus have we made it plain, how the constitution of the Jewish discipline was maintained by a sejunction and separation from all other people of the earth. They were, indeed, the only nation under heaven that worshipped the one true God and no other; and such,

[1] Jer., v.; Ezek., xx.; Isai., i., 4, 5, 6.
[2] Ps. cx. 4.
[3] Isai., lxvi., 12, 19.
[4] Isai., lxv., 17.
[5] Ibid., lix., 20; Jer., xxiii., 5, 6; Hagg., ii., 7.

for the true religion, did the very Heathen acknowledge; for Varro, having run over the whole catalogue of the Pagan Deities, concludes that to be the true God who was adored without an image; and expressly mentions the Jews; nay, and that it had been well to have followed them in it. We see how happy they were whilst they held themselves to this. From the very moment that Abraham forsook his father's idol family, he was blessed with a peculiar promise of a seed, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed, and united into one religion, as in effect it was shortly after our Saviour's coming in the flesh, so wonderfully did His holy doctrine obtain.

SECTION V.

THE TYPICAL CHARACTER OF THE JEWISH RELIGION.

Now, the ministry of the Mosaical Religion consisting of Priests, Prophets, and Kings, let us consider how all these high qualifications were accordingly united in the mission and person of Christ. For then was this separation from all other nations to cease; for so it did. The temporal Sceptre (as we have shown) departing from Judah, he being both Priest and Sacrificer too, their sacerdocy and sacrifice were brought to an end; and being Prophet by mission and commission, after Him were no more prophets; and, by ancient tradition of the Jews themselves, whoever was the Messiah, implied royalty, and carried a king in the very name. Now, had not Christ our Lord been a

Prophet, He could not have revealed to us His Father's will. Had He not been Priest, He could not have offered sacrifice; and, were He not a King, never could He have saved His people from their sins, and given them those royal privileges, promised to His faithful subjects, of reigning one day with Him; nay, appointing and calling them to kingdoms also, not of this world, but in the world to come, which was the rock they split upon.

Nor was Almighty God less merciful to the sinful world; for, when mankind had universally gone astray and defected, He designed a Saviour, qualified to appease and reconcile us to His Divine justice, without reproach, calling and rescuing many out of ignorance and superstition, as the patriarch before mentioned, with others; the Jewish Religion becoming conspicuous to all the nations round about them, as being first planted in Syria, the most proper to be dispersed through all the world, and first inhabited after the universal Flood. Now, though the only ordinary salvation was offered to the Jews,[1] by which they had mighty advantages over the Gentiles, having also the Law and the Prophets, yea, and Synagogues in divers places, even after they were subjugated by the Romans; yet were not the Gentiles altogether neglected, a star miraculously appearing to them at the Messiah's nativity, a portentous eclipse at His crucifixion. They had likewise the prophecies of the Sybils, to which divers of the Pagan authors gave testimony.

[1] Rom., ix., 4, 5.

But however it fared with the virtuous Gentiles before the Incarnation, after His coming, and when the Jews had learnt and seen in how mean circumstances He appeared; both of them startled at the Cross,[1] counting the Wisdom of God but foolishness, in comparison with their high-flown fancies and expectations, rejecting His counsel against themselves. Thus He came to His own, and His own received Him not;[2] though both saw the miracles He did, and heard the blessed Doctrine He preached; nay, and were evidently convinced beyond all contradiction; yet would they neither hear nor see, whilst those who did receive Him, to them He gave power to become the sons of God. And those who, before His coming, knew nothing of the mystery, were yet saved by His coming, and the propitiation He was to make;[3] God being pleased by way of anticipation to forbear, till the fulness and amplitude of time; in the interval graciously accepting the sacrifices which were offered, and the types of this all-sufficient oblation.

That this was, in the mean time, the true and only veritable religion, before our Saviour came, and how it may still so appear, (the Christian Faith being but the same they professed, spiritualized) we shall show. For, as to what the Jews at present profess, it is but a mean carcase and corruption of the ancient Synagogue, mingled with innumerable vain and fabulous traditions, horrid blasphemies, and extravagancies beyond all that

[1] I. Cor., i., 23. [2] John, i., 11.

[3] Sanguis Christi profuit, antequàm fuit.

one meets with among the most ignorant Pagans. We have, in part, already shown the rise and progress of the Jewish religion, by what a special grace and favour it pleased God at first to take unto Himself a people from among the Heathen world. For, when ignorance, superstition, mysterious impurities, tyranny, and all manner of licentiousness, had perverted the nations,—that vicious men were deified, brute animals adored for gods, and the natural principles of religion universally depraved,—a certain poor, despicable people, in an obscure corner of the world, emerged with the noblest sentiments of piety and severe virtue, representing the Divinity as an Eternal Being, Infinite, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Wise, Holy, independent and self-happy: Him a certain family of their forefathers worshipped, observing His laws, and renouncing the wicked customs of the age they lived in; forsook all they had, to adore and serve Him.

These, growing into multitudes, and for many years partly sojourning, and partly detained under cruel servitude, became not only of slavish tempers and very despicable, but such as, in all likelihood, had perverted their religion among those idolatrous Egyptians, where they were in bondage, as, by their continual proneness to idol worship, may be presumed. So that, far from being like their Patriarchal ancestors, these were, of all other, the most unpolished, stupid, and averse to all good—obstinate and stiff-necked, as God does frequently complain. Indeed, the Israelites and Idumæans had the same grandfather, nor, doubtless, wanted they the

good and holy instructions of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, &c., as well as the rest. Yet these it pleased God, of His special grace and favour, to select and make His peculiar people, under (as we have shown) a peculiar government and law, which, being by them observed, though with divers interruptions, for two thousand years, manifestly showed the faith, which they professed, could have its original from no other than Almighty God; not, I say, as now corrupted, but as at first revealed and received: this the Holy Scriptures perspicuously make out.

In the mean time, stupendous it is to consider, how a people in possession of a country, laws, and religion, for so many ages, should at once be brought to such calamities as never happened to any nation under the cope of heaven; the malediction, for almost as many thousand ages since, altogether astonishing; whilst all their former captivities and calamities amounted to but one hundred and sixty-two years, the last has continued for nearly seventeen hundred years, without any relaxation or bettering their condition, notwithstanding all efforts and revolutions of other nations, and their since exceeding caution of offending God any more by those gross idolatries; for which before they had been so severely punished. The Babylonish servitude had, long before our Saviour's incarnation, reformed them of that sin, to which they usually imputed all their former sufferings. Something, therefore, extraordinary must needs be the cause; some horrid, exterminating crime, that should so long have detained them under so

execrable a judgment. Never read we of any nation so universally ruined, dispersed, and despised, and who have not a foot of earth more than what covers their wretched carcases when they fall; they, who were once the happiest people under heaven, the favourites of, and dear to God. They have now neither country, home, cities, temple, priests, altars, king, nor governor; but are vagrants over all the earth, without God in the world, and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; and all this most demonstrably, because they crucified the Lord of Glory, putting to an opprobious and malicious death the Great Messias, who came with such love and compassion to redeem them not only from the difficulties of the ceremonial law, and the prejudices they lay under by those corruptions which had so generally defiled it, but from all their sins and offences.

Nor for all this is their hatred at all extinguished; they still blaspheme that glorious Saviour, deny His mission; and, though they cannot but acknowledge the miracles He wrought among them, they say He was a magician, and affected them by the power of Beelzebub. To this St. Augustine gives answer that, if He were such, He was so before He was born; for He, whom they blasphemously thus accuse, sends them to their own prophets and predictions; so that it appears He knew the successes of every thing before He had a human being. And for the other, our Blessed Saviour Himself convinces them how unreasonable it was to fancy that Satan should cast out Satan, and the strong

man eject himself. Of these and the like nonsensical blasphemies their Talmud is full, and tells us God Almighty was so sorry He had violated His oath concerning the captivity of their nation, that He condescended to ask pardon of Rhabbas, son of Rhabana; and that, desiring to be absolved from His word, the Rabbi said aloud, *Lord, I absolve thee.* With these and the like prodigious dreams, is their present religion stuffed. The veil is still before their eyes as thick as ever, which God, of His infinite mercy, hastens to take away, that they may at last look on Him whom they have pierced, and be saved among the true Israelites; that the blood they have brought on themselves and children may be done away by the precious blood which was shed for them. For, though the sacrifice of the son of God was always pleasing to His Father for the wonderful condescension of His love and charity, yet most hateful was the sin of those who sacrificed Him.

Let us yet consider the providential ends concurring to this mystery, namely, the death of our Lord; Caiaphas and his cabal persecuted Him for reasons of state, and to maintain their places; the Devils, for our Saviour's casting them out of their usurped possessions by whole legions, and because they knew that, in murdering and bringing Him to death, God would dispossess and reject that people, who should be guilty of so impious ingratitude, and so abandon those whom He had so signally preserved from perdition.[1]

[1] Whereas, through all their other wickedness and captivity, He still heard, forgave, and restored them (Deut., xxx.; Nchem., i., 8, 9)

The chief priests would destroy Him, with the Scribes and Pharisees, because He thwarted and contradicted their false doctrine, hypocrisy, and covetousness. Thus it pleased God the Father to leave His only begotten and beloved Son to their implacable rage, that He might suffer and expiate for our sins. Thus, I say, out of all these contradictory designs and particular interests, He wrought his own most blessed ends and our salvation; for by this, Satan, crafty as he was, was himself ejected from his dominions over the blinded and abused world. The Jews, who crucified our Lord, to reconcile the jealous Romans and preserve their nation, were utterly destroyed by them, and the empire of Christ established for ever. And those who by all wicked means thought to free themselves, for thus rejecting their Messiah, were made miserable slaves and a people so undone, that, (as one truly observes) wherever we meet a Jew, we see a stone of the demolished Temple, and a ruin of Jerusalem never to be rebuilt, for a monument of their prodigious ingratitude.

Many good works did He amongst them; He healed their diseases, fed their hunger, instructed their ignorance, raised their dead. For which of all these did they use Him thus barbarously? For this, then, came

—though since, and now still, they are the most averse from idolatry, &c., for which they formerly were so signally punished, and that now they fast and pray; yet do they suffer by an exile of 1700 years;—no prophet appears; they still are under the curse, and their religion is so corrupted, that they are daily more and more blind.

the vengeance of Heaven upon them within forty years to the utmost, the time He proved their forefathers in the wilderness, for so long was the Lord pleased to spare them, that they might repent. But, being hardened in all impiety, after they had slain the Shepherd and murdered the Heir, they worry the flock and persecute His disciples, till their own iniquities brought upon them a swift destruction, a calamity so exceedingly great, that Titus himself, who was God's instrument to inflict it, refused the triumphal crown and pompous ceremony due to his conquest—so sanglant and beyond all description lamentable was the catastrophe of those he had overcome. Their own blood and malicious factions hastened their destruction within Jerusalem, as much as the Roman armies without.

Thus did Providence order it, showing that He alone was the invisible Emperor and Conductor in that famous expedition, according to the predicted curses threatened two thousand years before,[1] and that of our Lord Himself, deploring and weeping over that once beloved city.[2]

Lastly, let us consider what infinite and universal good the same wise and merciful God brought out of all this evil, according to His impervestigable ways and eternal purpose of grace.

[1] Deut., xxviii. [2] Matt., xxiii., 37, 39.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE CHRISTIAN AND EVANGELICAL RELIGION, TYPIFIED IN THE JEWISH.

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION.
SECTION II. THAT THE JEWISH DISPENSATION, BEING BUT TEMPORARY AND TYPICAL, HAD ITS FINAL ACCOMPLISHMENT IN THE MESSIAH.
SECTION III. THAT JESUS CHRIST WAS THE TRUE MESSIAH.
SECTION IV. CHRISTIANITY CONTRASTED WITH OTHER RELIGIONS.

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION.

When neither natural religion, ritual, nor positive laws, under all the former dispensations, were able to recommend and bring us to God, through the weakness and imperfection both of them and the whole race of man, fallen as he was from the light which should guide and conduct him, as yet but groping after the way, it pleased the same God, in the fulness of time, mindful of His merciful promise to our forefathers, no more to keep His people under types and shadows, the pedagogy of ceremonies and material sacrifices, which could not make the comers thereunto perfect, after the many and unsuccessful messages, prophets, and teachers—it pleased God, I say, to send His own and only Son, the long-expected Messiah, the Lord Jesus, who should

teach us a more living spiritual law and rule, should give us more mighty aids to subdue our aversion, and illuminate our understanding in the knowledge of those saving truths which, till now, lay undiscovered for ages, and were hidden under the veil to the Jews, but to the Gentiles under a cloud of midnight darkness. In a word, to show the glad tidings of salvation, that *evangelical religion*, the everlasting Gospel; which was to put an end not only to the Jewish but to all other worship; namely, as well to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, as to be the glory of His people Israel, and to continue so to the end and consummation of the world.

And though, as nearer approaching the happy period, the day began to break, and prophecies became more perspicuous, yet was the age then so universally corrupted, that, had not the Sun of Righteousness appeared, darkness, confusion, and atheism, had involved the whole world. It was now, then, that the Messiah, according to the prophecy going before concerning Him, being ineffably conceived of the Holy Ghost in the womb of a Virgin,[1] was born perfect God and perfect man, and in all things subject to our infirmities, (sin only excepted) to be a Saviour as well of that miserable and ungrateful people the Jews, (who, though about this period earnestly expecting, rejected Him) as He promised to their forefathers, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, as to the whole race of mankind, strangers to the Covenant, and without God in the world.[2]

[1] Isaiah, vii., 14.

[2] The miserable state the whole world was in, and how aban-

All these He came to rescue from the darkness of Atheism, ignorance, and superstition of the Heathen; the ineffectual and burdensome ceremonies of the Jews, to the participation of His infinite grace, and by His unsinning obedience fulfilling the law in a more divine, rational, and spiritual way, dignifying our imperfect services by His most perfect righteousness. For God would now no longer connive at the universal ignorance even of the Heathen world, (as the Apostle tells the Athenians) nor permit Satan to delude mankind,[1] though all this while He left not himself without a witness, nor the very Gentiles without means sufficient to convince them of their gross errors and superstitions. For, besides the aspectable works of Creation, natural light and reason, they had at this time some glimmerings and expectations, as well as the Jews, whose prophets spake more feelingly towards the dawning of the Gospel. It being at that time the common report, as Suetonius tells us, that out of the East should rise the universal Monarch;[2] and this Pliny seems to say should be ushered in by an extraordinary star, as a lucky omen of some great benefit to mankind.

In order to this, about seventy years before the final destruction of the Jews, according to the prediction of Malachi,[3] God sent His messenger, the great precursor, John the Baptist, whose miraculous birth and other circumstances showed how great a person he should

doned at this period to all manner of abomination and vice, we find described by Eusebius, De Demonstrat. Evang., l. viii., in Præfat.

[1] Acts, xvii. [2] Suet. Vespas., c. 4. [3] Mal., iii., 1.

prove, in order that, by his preaching repentance and reformation, he might qualify men for the approach of the Messiah, and the glad tidings of the Gospel.[1] That he himself not being whom they expected,[2] was yet commissioned to preach and prepare them for His coming, and to let them know they were no longer to flatter themselves with their former privileges, as being the posterity of Abraham; but that, if they did not now amend and bear better fruit, the axe would be laid to the root, and they cut down like barren and unfruitful trees.

Those who generally embraced this doctrine, he initiated by baptism, which was a ceremony the Jews themselves used at the receiving of new proselytes. Men, says Maimonides, were circumcised and washed also; women only baptized, with a peace-offering, during the standing of the Temple; and the rite was of such antiquity, as to have been practised before the law itself,[3] (baptism being always understood by washing of their clothes;) so that it appears they entered not into the first Covenant without it. Hence St. Paul[4] speaks of baptism not as a ceremony, but doctrine. They did not, therefore, wonder at this action of St. John. Besides, they held that their Messiah was to be introduced with that *ablution*, as may be gathered from the history. Whilst John was about this office, receiving all that came, publicans, sinners, and soldiers, and men of all conditions, to show that

[1] In the New Testament called the *Kingdom of Heaven*, as being the only means leading to it.

[2] John, i., 25. [3] Exod., xix., 10. [4] Heb., vi., 2.

God was no respecter of persons, he told them he was neither *that* Elias, whom they also had a tradition should come before their Messiah, nor himself that illustrious person, yet he plainly showed him to the multitude; when, having the honour to baptize his own Saviour, he saw the heavens open, and the dove-like Sacred spirit descending on him, heard that heavenly voice, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*[1].

Thus attested by the Father, came the holy Jesus to be baptized; not that *He* needed cleansing, who was to wash away the sins of others, but that, being pleased to assume our nature, He was in our stead to fulfil all righteousness. This happening about the thirtieth year of our Saviour's birth,[2] (for John had begun to preach the year before) our Blessed Lord, who till now had lived a humble and obscure life, began to manifest himself and own His mission, first to his countrymen, (after the flesh) the Jews, and to preach his excellent and spiritual doctrine, and to confirm what He taught with such miracles, as nothing could have produced but the Divine power. He sharply reproves their horrible corruptions; what doctrines and glosses they had superinduced and put upon the law, shows them why they were to worship no longer at Jerusalem alone, and confine religion to particular places, or fancy and pride themselves as the only people of God, whilst they made

[1] S. John, i. 33-4.

[2] Our Lord was born on December 25th, in the forty-third year of Augustus's reign, C. Jul. Cæsar Vipsanianus and L. Æmilius Paulus being consuls.

such outward professions of holiness, hypocrites as they were within.

But this plain dealing and discovery of their errors, perstringing their covetousness, formality, malice, and spiritual pride, excited such a hatred against Him, notwithstanding all the miracles and good works wrought amongst them, having done more among them in three days, than had been done under all their various dispensations for a thousand years, they never desisted persecuting Him, till they had put Him to a most cruel and ignominious death. And albeit, after this, He confirmed and asserted His mission and divine character by His stupendous resurrection from the dead, and the derivation of His miraculous gifts on His disciples, yet did they not believe on Him to be the Christ. They rejected His testimony and counsel against themselves, blaspheming His sacred name, and endeavoured with all the spite which malice could infuse, to obstruct the progress of His doctrine. When, therefore, having given charge to His apostles and their successors to proselyte all nations to His religion, He after forty days ascended visibly into heaven, confirming and enabling them by the miraculous gift of tongues to divulge that saving Gospel for the conversion of the world; the wonderful success whereof, together with its incomparable purity and perfection above all other religions, and consequently asserting it to be the only truth, is what we shall make out beyond all possible contradiction.

SECTION II.

THAT THE JEWISH DISPENSATION BEING BUT TEMPORARY AND TYPICAL, HAD ITS FINAL ACCOMPLISHMENT IN THE MESSIAH.

That religion and religious worship are due to God, we have learnt from the law of nature, and that there is a future reward (of congruity at least) established for those who live according to it. We have showed the utter impossibility of attaining that reward by a false religion, and asserted the Scriptures, which direct us, to be true.

We come now to the spiritual and evangelical, of which the ritual and temporal was but the figure and adumbration, namely, the *Christian Religion*, as that which was the first in intention of Almighty God, the Great Legislator and Arbiter of His own worship; and in relation to which alone, whatsoever agreeable service former religions might possibly pretend to, was accepted.

We have in the former chapter shown to how sad a period both the Jewish nation and religion came, and how that enclosure and partition wall was taken away, to admit Gentiles into the Church, and by a gracious Providence, to succeed it. For it is evident that the first Covenant and Alliance did not extend to all, (the promises of which could respect only a single and peculiar people) nor indeed was it intended it should, forasmuch as all the world could not have dwelt and been contained in the same country, especially in Jewry, (being one of the least of Asia) nor under the same

Temple, which, how ample and capacious soever, could not have been sufficient for all those to have worshipped, and have done their devotions in, to whom the joyful sound of the Gospel come. Besides, had Circumcision been universal, it could have been no sacrament of distinction. And there must needs have been another Covenant, essentially differing from the first, (according to that of the prophet Jeremiah[1]) far more perfect. But yet this was not to last but for a time, as a mystical signification of the circumcision of the heart, not to be required of the Jews only, but of all the world in the New Covenant, which entitles Christians to a spiritual and better Canaan than what that rite did promise.[2]

The law had once no less than four advantages, discriminating the Jews from all the world; which were then marks of the true religion: first, the knowledge of the true Deity; second, the Sacerdocy, or Priesthood, and, consequently, the only right to sacrifice; third, their government under a Theocracy, God being their invisible King; their visible, one of a particular tribe; and, lastly, the gift of Prophecy. None of which prerogatives they have at present, nor have had for many ages, whereby to discriminate themselves to be the only people of God; but such character and evident signs to the contrary, that no nation or people under Heaven are in so sad condition. The knowledge

[1] Jer, xxxi., 31, 33, 37.

[2] Gen., xvii., 7. Salvation was not absolutely tied to that sign, since Abraham pleased God before he received it, and it was omitted for no less than forty years in the Wilderness.

of the True God is now in a manner universal. Their sacrifices are now quite abolished, as being annexed to their Temple only, long since destroyed and burnt. Nor have they priest or Levite to sacrifice, all their genealogies being confounded. Nor have they king or prince amongst them; the whole nation, who should be his subjects, being long since miserably dispersed, destroyed, and enslaved. In a word, the spirit of prophecy has ceased among them, which was the prime and most conspicuous sign of their election, and being so near to God.

The external religion, therefore, of the Jews could be no other than typical, relating to something which was to succeed it, and become universal. For instance, the faithful and elect people were prefigured sometimes by the people of Israel, sometimes by the primogeniture, by the Levites, &c., so that there is nothing more exact than the proportion between the Christian and Jewish Church. The Israelites were separated from all other nations and people; so the Christian, from all other religions: the Israelites were abhorred by all other nations; so the Christian, by all the wicked world: the Israelites were under oppression and servitude for a long time; the Church of Christ, hated, persecuted, and cruelly martyred from time to time: the Israelites had no other guide and leader than God, no light but His fiery pillar, no protection during all their tedious wanderings in the desert, but God's wonderful protecting Hand, no bread but what rained from Heaven; and the Christian Church may say the same.

And, as God was in Israel, and would erect there only His Tabernacle and Temple, the faithful Christian only is both His Temple and Tabernacle.

Their divine service prefigured the spiritual: the Levites, all the faithful, who in God's account are princes: the white garments and ministers of the Tabernacle, the innocence and sanctity of those who follow the Lamb and approach to God: the purity of the body, that of the heart: so the blood of goats and lambs, the blood of Christ: the waters of purification, which cleansed the stains of the body, prefigured the ablution of baptism, accompanied with the spiritual grace which sanctifies our souls: by Abraham's two wives, that of Sarah, the evangelical covenant; by that of Hagar, the law of bondage, namely, the Jewish ceremonies: to Mount Sinai, oppose Mount Sion: in the sound of the trumpet, the voice of the Gospel, which goes out into all the world. In a word, to Moses, the mediator of the law and Old Testament, Christ, the Mediator of the New and better Testament.

Again: the different states of the church are figured by the different states of the people of Israel; our spiritual servitude, by their temporal; our deliverance, by their return out of captivity, and the like. So just and natural are the identities and resemblances, that Holy Scriptures do not unfrequently blend and mingle them together in the same chapter; that which concerns the temporal of the one, the spiritual of the other; and this in almost all occurrences and events; remarks obvious, yet so important, that, without observing them, it is not

possible to understand the Old Testament, or with them, to be ignorant of it.

In short, whatever happened under the New Testament, was shadowed in the Old, even from the very beginning of time, even from the first Adam to the second: the tree of life in Paradise was to be eaten as a figure of Christ, who calls himself a tree in divers Scriptures; and this typical tree and fruit were only to preserve a natural and worldly life; Christ eaten by faith, an eternal life. But of the typical tree our first parents did never yet eat, because, being in a state of innocence, they had no need of it. The tree of which they might have eaten, they neglected; of that which they were prohibited to eat, of that they eat. The Tree of Life was Christ; the Tree of Knowledge, the law.[1] The Tree of Life symbolized Christ with all his graces evangelical; the eating of it, the union of mankind in Him. The Tree of Knowledge implied the law in all its rigour, and the prohibition of eating it, that we were not to obtain justification by the works of the law; and, therefore, to depend on, and nourish our hope and faith in Christ alone, the true and real *Arbor vitæ*. Thus, as eating manna figured the real union of that food with the bodies and faith of the Israelites, so was it a type of our union with Christ in the Holy Sacrament. And, in like manner, the Paschal Lamb, and all those other legal sacrifices, were types of that Great One offered upon the Cross. And divers of these sacrifices were to be eaten, to intimate man's

[1] Lex, data Adæ et Evæ, est quasi matrix omnium præceptorum Dei, quæ pullulârunt posteà data per Mosen.—Tertull. advers. Jud.

union and coalescence (as it were) with Christ the antitype, by the spiritual manducation of His sacred Body in the consecrated elements.

In sum, Jesus the Lamb, being slain from the beginning of the world (in designation), all sacrifices and atonements from that period were effectual only by His blood. Nor was Almighty God ever reconciled to any sinner before, under, or since the law of Jewish Ordinances, but by virtue, regard to, and intuition of the Blessed blood of Jesus! Though they who were so long under the law and Mosaical Dispensation, they knew it not but rarely, and under types and shadows, till the Messiah, the substance, appeared, and removed the veil. On this, then, may we depend, that all sins whatsoever are remitted us in baptism, and all committed after baptism remissible; and the person committing them shall receive remission, upon true repentance, at any time, according to the tenor of the Gospel. For sin, after illumination, through frailty committed, we are taught by Christ daily to ask forgiveness.[1] Then are we firmly to believe that comfortable article, "forgiveness of sins," as an undoubted truth, exciting us to thankfulness, to love, and future care. Again: wicked Cain was a type of Christ's enemies; Esau's despising his primogeniture, a type of the profane renouncing the inheritance of Heaven, for the present enjoyments and sensual satisfaction of this life; Lot's wife, of such as having escaped sin by God's grace, fall back and apostatize again. The action of Sampson over the Philistines, of David over Goliah, are types of the vic-

[1] Acts, ii., 38.

tories and triumphs of Jesus Christ. The presence of God in the Tabernacle figured the Incarnation of the Word, which dwells,[1] as in a tabernacle, in the faithful. The writings of Moses were the canon and rule of all the Prophets; and therefore Isaiah, Malachi, and even our Blessed Lord himself, send their auditors for these things to Moses; and it is said that his last *Epicedium*[2] comprehends the sum of all the prophecies which respect the Church.

Thus the religion which we now call *Christian* is (as St. Augustine says) but still the old religion,[3] which began with mankind, though it has not been called *Christian* but since the coming of Christ. Our Lord did not affect the bringing in of novelties, so that many of His Parables we find to have been taken out of the ancient Jewish Doctors,[4] as that of the Labourers in the Vine-

[1] Deut., xxxii., xxxiii. [2] Ἐσκήνωσε. St. John, i., 14.

[3] Eusebius (Hist. Eccles., l. i., c. 4) shows that the Christian religion is the same with the Patriarchal, even before Moses, which he proves by many instances.

[4] [The following passage, from the pen of the learned Mr. Hartwell Horne, contradicts this assertion. Speaking of the Parables of the New Testament, he says, "These compositions of Christ were all *original*. Dr. Lightfoot and others have shown that Jesus often borrowed proverbs and phrases from the Jews. But an Inspired Teacher would not surely propose *whole parables*, that were in common use, for his own. Nor does it appear that any body used the parables of Christ before His time. For instance, the parable of the Householder and the Labourers, (of the Ten Virgins, and many others) which is extant in the Jerusalem Gemara, was written an age and a half at least after the destruction of the Temple. It is more probable, therefore, that it was written in imitation of Christ, than borrowed from any ancient tradition. Introd. Crit. Stud. H. Script., vol. ii., part ii., chap. v., sect. 6.]

yard; the rich glutton; the Wise and Foolish Virgins. We have shown already, how Baptism and the Holy Eucharist had their spring ftom the Jewish purifications and Passover. The *Schelikkim*, *Nehijm*, and *Khakhamim*, answered to the Apostles, Doctors, pastors of the primitive Church; the *Niddui* and *Cherem* to their excommunication; and so of sundry more.

For thus it pleased the Divine Wisdom, by innumerable types and figures, to inculcate the perfection, excellency, functions, and ministry of our great redemption.

To proceed yet a little farther: Isaac, conceived in the womb of a barren mother, the sole delight and only son of an indulgent father, and the foundation of that mighty promise to Abraham and his seed for ever, was offered in figure on a mount, even by the hand of his tender father, and raised (as it were) from death under the fatal knife, to be the source of a posterity like the stars of Heaven for number. See, on the other hand, our Blessed Lord Jesus, the Messiah, in whom alone his Father was well pleased; our Isaac, the spring of all our blessings and promises infinitely exceeding those of God to Abraham, conceived in the womb of a pure virgin, was offered a real and bloody sacrifice for us on Mount Calvary, was miraculously raised from the dead, and became father of a posterity more numerous than the stars of Heaven, and the sands of the sea for multitude.

Joseph is sold by his unkind brethren, out of envy, accused falsely, and condemned, because he would not sin against God with a wanton adultress. See him delivered from prison, advanced and honoured by the

prince, representing our Jesus, sold and delivered to the wicked Jews, his brethren, for envy; condemned and put to death, because He resisted the corrupted and adulterated Synagogue. See him, *I say*, freed from the prison of the grave, and advanced to sit at the right hand of the King of Kings.

Moses, the mediator of the old and legal covenant, preserved from the cruel Pharaoh, exposed upon the water, saved from perishing in it, that he might save and rescue the people and Church of God, represented Christ, who came into the world, the Mediator of a New Covenant, rescued from the murderous Herod, that He might be the Saviour of the world.

Jonas, swallowed by a monstrous fish, to appease the raging tempest, is cast upon the shore about the third day after; so Christ, devoured by the cruel grave, on the third day emerges from its jaws.

David, from a poor and humble shepherd, advanced to be a monarch, was the most remarkable type and figure of that great Shepherd of the flock, and Bishop of our souls, who, after all His exinanition, and the things He suffered for us, is become the Monarch of both worlds, the dominion of whose kingdom shall endure for ever.

Thus, Moses and the Law give the light to Christ[1]—Christ to Moses.

[1] That sacrifices were but types, consult Isai., i., 11—lviii.; Jer., vii., 21, 23; Micah, vi., 6, 7; Malachi, i., &c. Some even of their own Rabbins confess that they were all to cease, save those of praise and thanksgiving, in the days of the Messiah. Thus,

Now, all mankind being polluted with sins, no sacrifice from among them could possibly expiate those sins; and therefore God the Son, who was God and Man without sin, undertook it for him. The miracle, then, or rather mystery, of the Christian religion, consists in this—that He to whom sacrifice is offered is God; the victim offered to Him is God; and the Priest who offers it is God; and He who is offered is God and Man, that so to Him Man might be offered for the sin of man; the Lord Jesus being the Invisible Priest; the Priest, the visible Jesus. Therefore, the sacrifice of His Son is and always was pleasing to God the Father, but not the sin of those who so maliciously sacrificed Him.

To proceed, then, as to types and shadows, the Jewish religion was yet, during all that dispensation, certainly divine and true.[1] Witness the miracles, the sublimity of its morals, disinterestedness of its doctrine, as to holiness of life and accomplishment of its prophecies, though with all these exceedingly defective, and in divers things very weak and extravagant, but as they related to things and persons more sublime and perfect. For who can else comprehend or imagine that the great and infinitely Holy God should be God of but one small and despicable people and nation only? that the Divinity should be confined (as it were) to a material chest or little cabinet of wood? Him, whom the Heaven of Heavens could not contain, should dwell in a moving

Rabbi Hadurson (on Gen., xlii.—xlix.); and that in His days there should be no more distinction of beasts; Christ fulfilling the Law in a most perfect manner.

[1] I. Cor., x.

tent or temple made with hands? or that the external purity of the body should be so much insisted on by Him who is the Father of Spirits; that he should delight in the bloody sacrifices of innocent beasts, in commutation for the sins of wicked men? All these were mean, poor, and (as the Apostle calls them) beggarly elements.[1] He who is the God of Glory, before whom the angels veil their faces, and who dwells in the light inaccessible, should please Himself with mundane pomp and busy ceremonies of man? What possible proportion have all these to the infinite glory and wisdom of God?

But, when we worthily consider what was to follow and succeed all this preparation, and the analogy these things had to those to come, we shall find them to represent an economy and service highly becoming the wisdom and providence of God in a most admirable manner. For to begin with Abraham, for instance. Had not this faithful person quitted Ur of the Chaldees, his native and idolatrous country, he had continued an idolater, as were his parents.[2] Nor could he have preserved his posterity in the true religion and service of God; and so had his descendants failed of the promised blessing to all nations. In like manner had Jacob sojourned still with Laban, his children had likewise

[1] Gal., iv., 9.

[2] [That Abraham was an idolater before his call is plain from Holy Scriptures, though Josephus seems to intimate the contrary. Hence Joshua (xxiv., ii.) "said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abram, and the father of Nachen; *and they served other gods.*"]

been corrupted, as their uncle Esau's were, mingling with strangers; the holy race had been confounded, and consequently the genealogy of the glorious Messiah, who was, according to the flesh, to descend from a peculiar line and tribe of that stock, disordered.

It was, therefore, by signal Providence that all this was prevented, as was also even His sending the Patriarchs into Egypt, there to live by themselves, and afterwards his delivering them from servitude, and bringing them forth, to plant them where He did; since their alliances, hopes, promises, manners, inclinations, laws, ceremonies, and religion, were singularly and totally different from all other people and nations under heaven. For this effect, it was first necessary that God alone should be their King and Sovereign Magistrate. They were, indeed, for their frequent rebellions and departure from His laws, sometimes sorely afflicted, and seemingly abandoned under tedious and sharp captivities; yet did none of them last above seventy years, till they were freed again; lest, being deserted a longer time, they should utterly have lost and forgotten their religion, His praises, and that they were God's peculiar people, designed to be under this economy, till the Messiah, their true deliverer, should come.

In order to this, was first discovered to Abraham the knowledge of the true God, when all the rest of the world had forgotten Him, lying in ignorance and gross idolatry. To him was enjoined the covenant of circumcision, to be made in the concupiscential flesh, as a token of distinction from the impure nations; nor was

it, therefore, on any other account or natural cause or impediment (as some have profanely fancied), since men are far from using to receive such painful and difficult rites, and so averse to the tenderness of parents (as we may well conclude from the behaviour of Zipporah), though it had not also (as it has) something of indecent and opprobrious in it. And this rite must needs prove that the Author of their religion was God; it being ridiculous to conceive that human reason would have chosen an institution so painful and burdened with so many costly sacrifices, and ceremonies besides.

Then, the assigning them the land of Canaan (possessed by the first Patriarchs, for a short time), fixed their affections and longings after it, that they might not defile themselves with other nations, or be dispersed among them. And so strongly were they assured of it to their posterity, as that they would never be other than sojourners in other places, wherever they came, all their lives long. Hence, such as died in Egypt during this tedious interval took care that their bones might be transported to the Land of Promise, when God was pleased to deliver them, both to manifest their faith, and to oblige their posterity to set their hearts and expectations upon it; teaching us Christians how we ought to set our affections on the heavenly Canaan, looking on this world but as a transitory passage to a better. And that that country (full of notorious sinners, the seven nations whom God had cast out) should not pervert His chosen people, He ordered their utter extermination; such as out of indulgence they spared,

becoming snares and perpetual mischief to them: as do likewise all those darling sins of ours, which, as so many *Canaanites*, we spare, and do not utterly extirpate.

The Tabernacle first, and afterwards the Temple, which God would have the centre of His service and material oblations, was fixed and confined to a certain place, that His people might not wander and stray from the true religion and the place where the Messiah was to be born. In a word, it was for this that the Law itself was also such as obliged the Jews to such an aversion to all other nations, as to look on them with contempt and abhorrence; and the like detestation had the Heathen for the Jews, seeing them sacrifice divers animals which the Gentiles worshipped and esteemed as gods; and that they, on the contrary, used to eat swine's flesh and other things the most abominable to them. So that the exterior purity of the body, prescribed by the Levitical Law, prohibited them all manner of converse with other people, whom they looked upon as profane. Nor was this all; for God did also separate one whole tribe from all their brethren, namely, that of Judah, out of which the oracle, pronounced by their grandfather Jacob, foretold the sceptre should not depart, nor the Law given from between his feet, till Shiloh, that is the Messiah, (as the Chaldee, &c., expounds it) should come, who should no longer separate, but gather all nations into one.

Lastly, out of this royal tribe a peculiar family was set apart, namely, that of David, upon whose throne He promised his posterity should sit for ever and ever; which had been evidently false, were it not accomplished

in Christ, the Prince of everlasting peace, of whose kingdom there is no end.

These and the like were God's designs for the bringing about man's redemption, according to His Divine and secret purpose; but which He thought not good to execute at once, but by types and figures, and by gradual preparation, discovering some by glimpses to particular and favoured persons only, such as the holy Patriarchs—Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, Daniel, and other of the Prophets, whereof some were harbingers and forerunners; though all this while involved in types, and mostly in shadows, which, as the Sun of Righteousness approached, so they by degrees dispersed. For, as we have shown, they had all respect to the times of the Gospel, and even unto ours, upon whom the ends of the world are come. They were wrapped in clouds, not only to conciliate our greater reverence, but to exercise our understanding and diligence; to stir up our devotion, render us humble, incite us to study and search the Scriptures, and, perhaps, were as necessary to bring about His great design; since, had men known what the events would have been, the Apostle tells us,[1] they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.

It was expedient, therefore (as God had before determined), at that time to conceal his purpose, that so many things should be shaded under types and symbols, to be hereafter explained and accomplished. We find divers high and glorious things veiled under figures, and mystically described by the Prophets, attributed to

[1] Acts, iii., 17.

the reign of Christ, which never happen to the Jewish Church, or to those holy men according to the letter. David speaks many things of himself, which were never accomplished in his days, and these St. Peter interprets very plainly.[1] Nay, the Jews themselves were not ignorant of it, and, therefore, were so studious of the hidden sense of Scripture, as carried them to excess in their laborious critiques.

The *brazen Serpent*, the persecutions of David and other holy men, were types of our Blessed Saviour's sufferings; Solomon of His spiritual kingdom and glory; and those remarkable chapters of Isaiah[2] show us, as in a table, all the famous passages of His whole life and passion, and issue of it. To this add those plentiful passages sprinkled through all the Psalter, &c. For thus it is written, and thus it ought to be, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, and that He might be the exemplar of holiness, charity, meekness, and all other divine virtues, which He could not have shown, had He been born great, high, and rich in worldly circumstances. The more poor and mean He appeared, the more wonderful and illustrious His might, works, and miracles. Besides, He was to expiate by His sufferings for our sins, to intercede for us, to bless us, and all to secure our faith and salvation.

Nor by these events alone did God prepare the Jews to embrace the true Messiah, but by imposing the heavy yoke of the Law, burdened with innumerable ceremonies, busy and chargeable; that, groaning under

[1] Acts, ii., 27.

[2] Isai., viii., 14; l., 6; lii., liii.; Dan., ix.; Zech., ix., xii.

a pressure which neither they nor their fathers were able to endure (as under sin, for the Law came in because of sin), they might long for Him, who, by fulfilling that Law at once, should break their ponderous yoke, and change it into a Law of liberty, to that of Christ, whose yoke is easy and burden light, and exercise their thoughts and minds about those important and sublime mysteries, whereof those busy ceremonies were but types and shadows. The former dispensation had nothing greater than carnal motives, temporal and fading blessings, which could never satisfy the souls of men designed for immortality and a more noble state, as is plain from several passages of Holy Scripture, especially the Psalms of David and the Prophets, the nearer they approached the dawning of that day, when this Star, or rather Sun of Righteousness, was to rise.

Thus, we are led to behold the infinite wisdom of Almighty God through all this dark economy. In the mean time, as to that inquiry how their forefathers were saved, and what the Patriarchal faith was, before and since the Mosaical institution (an account whereof I have already partly given), we may not suppose that either they or the Jews were obliged to believe every article of the Christian faith, as that the Messiah was to be born of the Virgin Mary, or suffer under Pontius Pilate, be crucified, die, be buried, descend to Hades, rise the third day, &c. Nor was all this creed believed at first by our Saviour's own disciples, till He had run through all these periods, and was actually risen from his grave. Nor understood they the mystery of the Sacred Trinity as we do, and many other recondite

secrets. But a more general belief in the Messiah was accepted, without a full knowledge of His Divine office. They were (as we have shown), all this while, under the schoolmaster, clouded with types and figures, so that even the Apostles, when they came to know that He was the Christ, were for a time forbidden to divulge it; because the grand evidences of His calling and high character, the descent of the Holy Ghost and resurrection, were not yet accomplished; by which His mission and doctrine were evidenced and asserted beyond all possible contradiction.

But though this secret mystery was at first thus clouded, as it pleased God the Father, mindful of His promise to our fathers, a glimmering light was seen, at least, by some more illuminated amongst the holy Patriarchs and Prophets. Abraham, our Saviour tells us, rejoiced to see His day;[1] Jacob, Job, David, the divine and (as a Father calls him) the Evangelical Isaiah, Daniel, John the Baptist, Anna, and the good old Simeon, we may safely reckon among these happy souls. The rest certainly expected some signal Deliverer, though they comprehended not the types; nor haply the Prophets themselves so explicitly, even what they prophesied; nor any else, till their predictions were come to pass. Those mysteries St. Paul tells us not being made known to the ages past.[2] Nor was such explicit faith actually required, farther than what is set down in the Epistle to the Hebrews — faith in God's general promise. Nor seem they, till the Messiah

[1] John, viii., 56.

[2] Ephes., iii., 4, 5; Heb., xi.

indeed was come, obliged to any other act of faith for justification, but such an universal belief, one time or other, without any intuitive cognizance of circumstances, as is required of Christians. And though, unless Christ had come and suffered according to the Scriptures, no flesh could have been saved, because all sacrificial rites and ceremonies, with all their best services, were imperfect and faulty, and, consequently, unacceptable without Christ, who, by fulfilling the Law, accomplished all; yet they knew it not, or very darkly; whereas, since the Gospel shone, we have a full, explicit, and distinct faith in our Messiah and all its mysteries, containing the substance of all those types and shadows, which were to have their completion when this Propitiatory had finished His mission.

Repentance yet was, doubtless, required of all, as well as faith. This is evident through all the Scripture; the exhortations to it we have in all the Prophets. And the beholding so many innocent creatures daily immolated and dying for their trespasses, as every sacrifice for sin presented them, could not but intimate to them what themselves deserved: though, perhaps, they might not so distinctly apply all this to the sacrifice and merits of Christ yet to come; whilst so they were reputed in the mind and purpose of God (for else, they must for ever have been abominable, and no delight to Him, namely, those bloody offerings, who looked upon a broken and contrite heart above all those costly ceremonies); and, though natural religion, reason, and God's aspectable works, easily lead men to acknowledge

and revere a Deity, and many to live virtuously, yet even the very wisest and deepest of them could never guess at the method by which God would bring them to salvation. In the covenant of works, God required of every soul entire obedience to the Law, which, perfectly observed, had, doubtless, justified the person; but, finding him altogether unable to come up to that, He graciously entered into a second Covenant of Grace, requiring only faith in God the Father and His promises for the redemption of the world; till Christ should come and be incarnate, which qualified Him to finish what we could not attain. Nor this by any inherent dignity properly in our faith or any other virtues, but through the benevolence and mercy of Almighty God; so that we are justified by his free grace alone, imputing the act of faith, working by love, to us for righteousness, instead of all other legal and ceremonial works.

This act of faith is the true and genuine cause of justification and salvation, above all other theological virtues. Not (as we said) from any dignity or excellency of the act itself (which God might have assigned and placed as well in charity or hope), but from His own beneficence and holy will that so it should be; and that faith might have this honour and effect; the Holy Ghost, as it were, mercifully condescending to bind even Himself to the very words and syllables, namely, the imputing our faith for justification, rightly applied, to our inexpressible and eternal consolation. And now, how far the same did operate for the faithful before our

Blessed Saviour's Incarnation, may piously and reasonably be conjectured.

SECTION III.

THAT JESUS CHRIST WAS THE TRUE MESSIAH; PROVED,

I. BY FULFILLED PROPHECY.

We now come to prove that the true Messiah, Christ, or the Anointed, is come—He, namely, whom the Jews long expected, and upon whom we Christians especially place all our confidence, and the religion and faith we profess relies. And that this Messiah is truly God and Man by mysterious Incarnation, and thereby qualified to accomplish the great work of that redemption which no religion else could effect, no other name being under heaven by which we could be saved, is the next and most important truth we have to clear.

There were seven things, the Talmudists say, which were ordained before the world:—1, the Law; 2, Repentance; 3, Paradise; 4, Hell; 5, Heaven; 6, the Sanctuary; and 7, the Messiah.

As to the name *Christ*, or *Messiah*, both siginifying the Anointed, it is a name, office, and dignity, and of persons set apart for some eminent calling, and, therefore, inaugurated with the same ceremony. So Kings, Princes, Prophets, Priests were anointed after the manner of the Eastern countries, with a sweet, balsamic exudation, or odoriferous composition, and did signify, from its spreading nature, the diffusiveness of grace and goodness. Whence that of the Spouse—*Thy name*

is as ointment poured forth.[1] Our Blessed Saviour was thus anointed in all the capacities of the Messiah, Priest, Prophet, King; so as never any other was before Him.

That the Messiah should appear about this time, was the universal expectation; and there were prophecies of it, not only among the Jews, but even the Gentiles.[2]

First, then, from Scripture prophecies, in a line from Adam, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Job, David,[3] it is abundantly evident that such a person was to come; not, as some later Jews still believe, to be a temporal deliverer, but a spiritual and eternal. By Jacob's prediction of the Shiloh, by Balaam's Star,[4] by that of the Magi, by the Sceptre's departure from Judah, this must be the true Messiah; for from thence to the Incarnation it remained in that family, that tribe still ruling even during all the time of the captivity, and afterwards, when under the Romans themselves they had a sort of Commonwealth, and, in some cases, liberty to punish capitally.[5] Zerubbabel was also of that tribe, and other captains and governors under the Persian, with great authority. But no sooner was He really come, or, at least, a little after His Passion, than at once the Jews lost not only all their own particular government, but

[1] Cant., i., 2,

[2] Cicero gives many hints of it in his epistle to Lentulus, and in his book, De Republicâ; Virgil in his fourth eclogue, though, to flatter Augustus, misapplied.

[3] Gen., iii., 15; xviii., 18; xlix., 10; Deut., xviii., 15, 18; Job., xix., 25; Ps. cx., 4.

[4] Numb., xxiv., 17.

[5] See all this made out by Eusebius, l. viii., De Dem. Evang., and Hist. Eccles., l. i., c. 6.

all the marks of all government whatsoever, living without law, prince, dwelling, country, possession, title, tribute, or the least mark of a people under any regiment or polity; nay, and they had lost their very books of genealogy, and were so disordered and scattered, that they despaired of their re-establishment. Their Temple was destroyed, their altars demolished, their city burnt and sacked, their priesthood abolished, &c. Add to this the completion of the prophecies.[1] That the glory of the second, though much inferior Temple for outward magnificence and cost, should be greater than that of the first; as it accordingly was, by the presence of our Blessed Saviour, the desire of all nations. Born as He was about the latter end of Augustus's reign, when all the world was in peace, the temple of Janus shut, the Roman empire now in its most flourishing state, and the earth under one prince, as never was there a time so fit for the Prince of Peace, and the spreading of the Gospel of Peace without interruption.

That the Jews were in great expectation appears from the fact, that no sooner did the Magi come to worship, than the whole Sanhedrim was consulted by Herod, who, jealous of his lately acquired authority, was so fearful lest the child should escape him, who he thought might live to supplant him, that he caused his own son to be murdered.[2] Tacitus and Suetonius report

[1] Haggai, ii., 7.

[2] This being told to Augustus, he is reported to have said, *Melius est Herodis porcum esse, quàm filium.* Macrob. Saturn., l. v., c. 4.

that the Jews were so impatient of the delay of his appearing, that it incited them to a rebellion, and how they flattered Vespasian with their opinion of his being the person, because he was a great and powerful prince, such a one as they dreamt of. But it could not be the body of the Jews who entertained this fancy, because the Messiah they expected was to deliver them from the Romans, and subdue the whole world to their law. And, indeed, this was the fulness of time; the sceptre, as we showed, was departed, it being punctually also at the expiration of Daniel's *weeks*,[1] an unanswerable prophecy, where is foretold the Messiah's cutting off from the people, but not for Himself, the Anointed being slain, the ceasing of the daily oblation and legal rites, the durability of His kingdom, in which the saints should reign; the ruin of the four monarchies figured by gold, silver, brass, and mixed iron.

All these fulfilled, are most convincing proofs.[2] It was now, also, that the Jewish religion was more than ever spread about the world by an accession of the Gentiles, and so prepared to entertain the Gospel in the fulness of time, and that the Roman Empire was in its highest *acme* of learning, eloquence, wit, pomp, and magnificence.

Appeal we to the Rabbins. They all expound Jacob's prediction to that of Christ, whose era was to be at the ceasing of their magistracy. Nor is there at present one

[1] Dan., ix., 24.

[2] These particulars see at large in the often cited Euseb., l. vi., c. 8. De Demonst. Evang.

Jew, who pretends to be of that ruling tribe,[1] so vigilant was Herod and the Roman Emperors to extirpate it, our Saviour being the very last who could have any pretence, being born in the reign of that tyrant, who was the first usurping stranger. Besides, many of their ancient doctors, weary of expecting, and convinced by innumerable arguments, confess He is already come, more than a thousand years since, though they know not where to find Him, but that He is hidden for their sins. The seventy *weeks* of Daniel, to the rebuilding of the demolished Temple, (according to all calculation) amounted to 483 years, namely, from the first of Cyrus, to Herod and Tiberius; so that, as the prophet Jeremiah writes to the captivity, that in seventy years they should return from their *temporal* captivity, so in just as many weeks of years they should also from their *spiritual*.[2] And this, with the rest, has been so closely urged, that they have no other subterfuge but that of the prophets being mistaken, whilst the more ingenuous affirmed their Messiah should come about the four thousandth year from the Creation.

The old Talmud of Rabbi Elias is express; and they are now so lamentably tired with attendance, as to acknowledge it vain to trouble themselves any longer about it. To this may be added an universal tradition

[1] As is fully and largely made out by Euseb. De Demonst. Evang., l. viii., 1, 22, explaining the ixth of Daniel.

[2] Their doctor, Nehemias, living fifty years before Christ, confidently averred that it could not be above fifty years before what Daniel so predicted would come to pass.

amongst them, that the true Messiah was then to appear when their whole nation was the most depraved, and wickedness abounded amongst them;[1] and that then they were so, Josephus[2] sufficiently sets forth, and even to that height of wickedness, that he tells us, they were worse than impious Sodom.

That the Romans never showed so great cruelty as against this perfidious people, may be reckoned an instance of the Divine displeasure for their rejecting their Saviour, who, to testify His mission, had done such wonders among them, that had they not been the most wilful and obstinate, they must have acknowledged Him the Messiah. As to the rest of those texts objected by the Jews, as the cleaving of Mount Olivet, the planing of ways, the exaltation of Jerusalem, and the like, besides that they are all verified in Christ, their own learned Maimonides[3] says expressly, they are parabolical and figurative.

The historians[4] we mentioned tell us of a report about that time, of an universal Monarch to be born in Jewry; and Josephus says there was a public inscription of it there in the market-place. This, with other predictions, so possessed the people, that they were disposed to rise upon every occasion, as they did with Judas the Gaulonite, Theudas, and other impostors, those arch levellers, who were all dispersed. Nor is the

[1] Zech., xiii.

[2] Joseph. Antiq., l. xx., c. 6, and De Bello Jud., l. i., c. 15.

[3] In Deuter.

[4] [Tacitus, Hist., l. v., 9-13. Suetonius Vespasian, c. 4-8.]

general and sudden silence of their own prophets to be passed by; their early and earnest looking for Him, by their questioning John the Baptist, &c. One Theodosius, a Jew, avows that in a certain record he had seen a short account of the miraculous conception of Christ, in which His Divinity was asserted, and His divine person registered among the priests by the name of Jesus, son of the Living God, and of Mary the Virgin. And Rabbi Hacodoch long since is said to have foretold, that His mother's name should be Mary, and spake of Bethlehem, and other circumstances of His birth. Rabbi Ula, from the ninth of Isaiah, confesses that JESUS of Nazareth (for so he styles Him) was crucified the day before the Passover. This, of necessity, must be on our *Good Friday*, and adds that He was, though very poor, of royal extraction, and that the disciples of *Hillel* should see Him, owning old Simeon for one of the chief amongst them.[1]

Another proof of the Messiah being come, may be gathered from Isaiah,[2] where we have His life and passion so graphically expressed, as if we saw it before our eyes, but especially in the twenty-second Psalm, so that not one accident or circumstance, to a tittle, no, not to the tasting of a little vinegar, but is punctually mentioned and repeated. We have there His being nailed

[1] Josephus, who yet describes His person, was not to write more, having already been one of the flatterers of Vespasian. For my part, as to that famous passage, where he describes our Blessed Saviour, I know not why we should not as soon raze out any period of that excellent History.

[2] Isa., liii.

to the Cross, piercing, revilings and blasphemies against Him; His sorrowful exclamation, the parting of His vesture, His death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and His leading captivity captive, &c. The descent of the Holy Ghost, too, is prophecied by Joel, the vocation and coalition of the Gentiles.

Nor is it to be passed by, the endeavour of Tiberius to have Him enrolled into the number of the Gods, who was God and Man; His very name, half Hebrew and half Greek, showing both Jew and Gentile were to have an interest in Him. And His Deity was asserted by the silencing of their oracles after the demons had confessed Him, at which Porphyry was not a little perplexed, it happening so near his birth. Augustus, likewise, even before His advent, is said to have erected an altar, *Primogenito Dei.* I pass by the acknowledgment of the aforementioned apostate,[1] that the Christians were the cause of the improsperity of their gods. Wherefore most semblable is that of Tertullian, where he challenges any of their false deities, and speaks of their being ordinarily in his time forced to confess Christ, their impotence of doing any feats where the holy Babylus was buried, and how their demons and all other Pagan conjurers were put out of countenance in the presence of any Christian. Never could any of their necromancers raise our Lord, or so much as His phantom. Hecadoch, a great rabbi, calls Christ the spiritual King.[2] But the most remarkable is what

[1] Porphyry.

[2] So also Rabbi Misdrach, upon the Psalms and other Scriptures.

Philo says upon it, that the birth of the Messiah should not be after the manner of other men. Hadarsan calls Him the *Bud*, not by carnal generation, as Zecharius[1] the *Branch*.[2]

Further, He was to be of the family of David,[3] (prefigured in Solomon, that happy, great, wise, and peaceable prince), of invincible power, reigning over souls, and by His doctrine subduing the world with spiritual weapons; never prince so rewarding his subjects. And that He was to be such a King, was shown, not only by the coming in of the kings of the earth and submitting their sceptre to His Cross, but in what we noted of the overthrow of the kingdom of Satan, in the silence of his oracles, demolition of his places of worship, overthrowing and breaking down their costly statues, and the unclean spirits ejected.

Of His being born at Bethlehem,[4] besides what was predicted, it appeared by the *Censual Tables* mentioned by Justin Martyr, as then extant, St. Cyprian, Tertullian, and others. That He was to be the Son of God,[5] was confessed by John the Baptist, by Nathaniel, Martha, Peter, and the rest, and by the expectation of the Jews themselves, as is plain by the High Priest's

[1] Zech., vii., 12.

[2] See the learned Huetius in his *Evangelical Demonstration*, and the parallel texts he has so laboriously collated, of all that God spake to the holy prophets since the world began, to perform the mercy promised to our forefathers, and to remember His holy Covenant.

[3] Jer., xxiii., 5. [4] Micah, v., 2. [5] Ps. ii., 7, 12.

question.[1] That He was to be born of a Virgin, was no less acknowledged, nor did any of his adversaries gainsay it; nay, attested by an angel.[2] That yet, for all this, He should appear in a mean garb,[3] innumerable Scriptures tells us, which made the lofty Jews despise Him, as expecting a pompous, worldly Prince; and therefore they called Him a blasphemer, for assuming that high dignity. Nay, the Apostles themselves were exceedingly possessed with this fancy, every moment expecting when He should begin His reign, so as to confound all the Roman power, and restore the kingdom of the Jews. And some of them ambitiously sought to be especial favourites, as the sons of Zebedee's children, insomuch as this seems to have been the greatest stumbling-block why the Jews did not believe in Him, for all His mighty works and holy doctrine, though the contrary was plainly enough foretold.[4] And how He made good His character for the office He was pleased to perform, satisfying His Father for us by His perfect righteousness and unsinning obedience, the New Testament is full from one end to the other.

Indeed, never was any creature so patient, mild, humble, merciful, gentle, and disposed to do good. He went about continually seeking for opportunities to instruct by His holy doctrine, to give and forgive. So holy, so devout, so temperate, contented, grateful, prudent, wise, loving, and charitable, so as never any was, debonair, peaceable, full of pity, obliging, fami-

[1] Isa., liii., 2; Zech., ix., 9.
[2] Ps., xxii., lxix.; Isa., liii.
[3] Matt., xxvi., 63.
[4] Luke, i., 30, 31.

liar, and condescending, and accessible even to little children, preaching the Gospel to the poor; and happy they, who were not offended at Him, that is, at those mean and humble circumstances which covered these transcendent excellencies. His doctrine was propounded in a plain and familiar way, yet with a gravity and such substantial and powerful authority, as became a Divine Legislator, and not as the Scribes and Jewish Doctors, whom, at twelve years of age, He posed. His Sermon on the Mount contains the whole duty of man. There it is He gives us the true interpretation of the law, not of the letter, but of the spirit, and containing such joyful tidings as would even transport the hearer. He came to institute a new covenant, which He ratified with His own blood; that those who believed in Him, that is, performed His easy commands by faith and repentance, should have pardon of sins, and partake of His future glory. Of this stipulation, and that we might in no ways doubt of it, innumerable are the Scriptures.[1]

2. BY THE TESTIMONY OF MIRACLES.

We now come from Prophecies to the events and testimony of Miracles, and other witnesses of the Divine Jesus; and of which He did more in three years, shall we say? nay, within the space of three days (as we noted), than were ever done by all the Prophets, who went before.

[1] S. Luke, xxiv., 47; Acts, ii., 38; v., 31; I. Tim., ii., 5; Heb., vii., 24; ix., 15; x., 29, &c.

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Never were such exploits performed by any potentate or conqueror of the world, as by the King of both worlds, vanquishing the terror of terrors, Death himself, subduing the powers of Hell and Darkness. And necessary it was it should be so, as He was to bring under, reform, re-edify, and new-make even the high and haughty spirits of both men and devils, and to change the customs of the whole world. In order to this, He was to show Himself first to the Jews, among whom what mighty works showed themselves, the Scriptures show; and such as God only could do, namely, create, as He did, eyes to the man born blind, and raising both Himself and others from the dead; discovering the very secrets of men's hearts, preventing men's thoughts; effecting cures at a distance, and this by a mere word only; foretelling future contingencies; making Himself invisible; not by tricks of *legerdemain*, or lying wonders, or feasible by art, magic, and help of evil spirits (whose kingdom He came to destroy), but by a power inherent in Him. And all of them leading to some good, and helpful to mankind; full of majesty, as pointing the finger of God, and of mighty consequence; and, though supernatural, yet by no means contrary to nature. Nor were they done in a corner, or in blind times, or with any fantastical ceremonies; but gravely, plainly, and solemnly.

The circumstances waiting on His birth were illustrated by an extraordinary phenomenon, a chorus of heavenly angels, besides the Angel of Annunciation; the strange birth of His precursor; visions to Joseph;

voices from Heaven; add to these, the Holy Spirit's resting on Him; His transfiguration; His curbing the tempestuous sea; the turning of water into wine; the multiplying of the loaves and fishes; the healing of innumerable and incurable diseases by a word; the forgiving of sins; for who but God can forgive sins? He knew letters, never having been taught; He told the woman of Samaria all that ever she did; He ejected all kinds of spirits; foretold His own Passion, and all that should happen to Him, even to Peter's denial, and his disciples deserting Him. He foretold the success of his doctrine, the destruction of Jerusalem forty years before it happened; with the miraculous escape and preservation of those Christians who retreated to Pella. He exercised the same omnipotent power over all the elements and things, the sea, winds, earth, plants, animals, and spirits, ejecting of these, not a few, but whole legions. He healed desperate infirmities, not only by His touch and voice, but by his very shadow; Oh, stupendous power! By a word only, without persuasion, He converted an avaricious publican, a wanton Magdalene; the one to leave his usurious bank, the other her sensual pleasure. But so, with one fiat, was the whole universe educed out of nothing; and by a word only were these things effected: He spake, and it was done.

And these things proving Him to be God, must needs assert His Messiah-ship. Nor had he only the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, which are abundantly enough, being the Fountain of Truth, but the testimony of the

very Heathen. Witness the centurion's exclamation, who saw Him crucified, "*Truly, this was the Son of God.*"[1] To this add the account which Pilate gave to the Senate of the wonders which He did. For the truth of all which Tertullian, Justin Martyr, and others attest, the public Acts remaining at that time, and therefore undeniable.

Whilst He conversed upon earth, neither Tiberius, nor any of those proud emperors, would assume so much as the title of Lord; till afterwards proud Caligula assumed it. For, indeed, Jesus alone was Lord of Lords, the Son of God, the first-begotten of every creature; begotten before all the worlds and times,—the Heir of all things—on earth without a father, in Heaven without a mother.[2]

He is named by an angel the Son of God; and that which is begotten of God must needs be *God:* God manifest in the flesh; Emanuel, God with us, must needs be *Man.*[3] He is the Word which created the worlds; and St. John tells us, that that Word was God, yea, properly and truly: One also with the Father. And, had not God thus come in the likeness of man,

[1] The appearance of the star at His birth is mentioned by Chalcidius; of the defect of the sun at His Passion (the moon being then at the full) by Phlegon and Dionysius; and so the earthquake. And his bitterest enemies, Ceslus, Porphyry, Julian, confess His miracles; yea, and the very Jews themselves, as may be seen in Eusebius, l. ii., 2. Hist. Eccles.

[2] In terrâ sine patre, in cœlis sine matre.—Origen.

[3] As Eusebius does admirably prove in his Evang. Demonstr., l. vii., c. 1.

nay, had He not really been Man, man could never have conversed with Him: nor could He have suffered for man.

Further, He asserted His Mission and Messiah-ship, not only by the Miracles Himself wrought, but by deriving all His power to His Apostles, as they did to others after them;[1] so long as this was necessary for the planting and setting of the Gospel.[2] And some even of those He raised from the dead, and had seen and felt this His mighty power, were surviving till near the reign of Trajan, as is affirmed by Quadratus, in his *Apology* to Adrian. After all, He raised himself, and ascended into Heaven, whence He sent down that Holy Spirit with those miraculous gifts, to enable His disciples to preach His glorious and saving truth over all the world. For those who knew no language but their own, were on a sudden enabled to deliver their message to the most strange and distant nations, every one hearing them speak in their own tongues the wonderful things of God.[3]

Thus this sound went into all the world, even to our British Islands and farthest Indies, as Eusebius tells us.[4] Nor did they accomplish these things and conversions by the power of eloquence, but began most of their Sermons at the ignominious death of their Master, whom they yet affirmed to be alive,—contradictions the most unlikely to gain credit, without a Divine and overcoming power. Who ever had the honour to be so

[1] Matt., x., 8.

[2] Consult Irenæus, l. ii., Tertullian (Apol. 23).

[3] Acts, iv., 31.

[4] De Demonstr. Evang., l. iii., c. 7.

adored, and so believed, and after an execution so infamous and shameful in the eyes of man? And this not in any obscure and inaccessible corner, and among idiots and ignorant people, but at Rome, the capital city of the world; at Athens, the eye of learned Greece; at Antioch, Alexandria, Ephesus, Smyrna, places and cities famous for persons of great name, for their wisdom and sagacity, and where all the wit and learning flourished, in the most learned, flourishing, and polite age that ever was!

They challenged all the world to convict them of forgery, when it was suggested they wrought their miracles by magical arts.[1] But, so far was Christ from working by the power of evil spirits and unlawful arts, that His doctrine utterly destroyed the worship of demons, and all impure rites in which these wild fiends had deluded the world so long. What can be so senseless, as to imagine the devils should assist to their own destruction? Had the *Sanhedrim* skill in magic (as the Jews affirm they had), to be able to discover impostors, they would certainly have done some feats to convince the people of it.[2]

[1] This appears by the several apologies made to the great emperors in those early days, resigning the issue of all they did to the undeniable matter of fact, for at least two ages after their Blessed Lord's Ascension: this is undeniably proved by Justin Martyr, Tertullian, St. Cyprian, Origen, Arnobius, Lactantius, M. Felix, Prudentius; yea, even down to St. Augustine.

[2] This is as true as the Legend of our Blessed Saviour's stealing the *Powerful Name*, which, the Jews say, had been guarded no less than a thousand years in the Temple.

The famous Jupiter, Saturn, and other Heathen deities, confessed themselves no other than foul and abominable spirits, frequently cast out by the only name of Christ; so that Tertullian dares their worshippers to bring any demoniac before a Christian, and they should see him compelling the evil spirit to acknowledge himself a devil; and this upon forfeiture of his life, if it succeeded not. Nay, he names several consular and great courtiers, whom every body knew, miraculously healed. As to the cure pretended to have been done by Vespasian, the physicians all acknowledged, that the blind man brought to him was curable by art; but we find no such among those many to whom our Saviour gave not only sight, but eyes. So healed He the *Hæmorissa*, after she had spent all upon the physicians to no purpose.

The several feats reported to have been done by Apollonius Thyanæus were proved to be wicked impostures, depending only upon the testimony of petulant men, and what was written in the ages after the pretended facts. Their authors, too, received rewards and honours for their legends and books.[1]

As to our Blessed Saviour, and the contemptibleness of the means,—His birth and education, His disciples, poor ignorant fishermen—if any think thereby to defame His miracles, the more it advances our wonder and admiration. If the verity of fact be asked after, and where these mighty deeds were done, the answer is easy. Where the doer of them was born, lived, and

[1] See Huet. Demonst. Evang., c. 147, &c.

died, namely, at Bethlehem, and the famous city Jerusalem, and in that celebrated Temple where He frequently preached. In secret did He nothing, nor in public to be praised of men; but to glorify God, and vindicate His doctrine.

Would you know the time? It was for three whole years; and the same miracles were often iterated, and the effects permanent and durable, and not illustrious for the present moment. As for witnesses, besides not only His own twelve Disciples, plain, honest, and disinterested men, but thousands: nor that once only, but at several times and occasions; nor these in the house alone, but in the city, streets, villages, country, wilderness, by land and sea: and, indeed, where not?

If you inquire after the facts, they were such as were sensible, visible, plainly palpable and easily discerned, without imposing accidents for substance, and qualities for real matter. And, were none of these recorded in the Scriptures, yet were their testimony sufficient at the same time; a famous Church having been there founded at Jerusalem by those Apostles of his, where He had performed so many wonders, taught and suffered.

But, to prevent all defects, divers of these Sacred Books were written then, or immediately after, and that so honestly, and with that ingenuity, as even to the Authors acknowledging their own failings and infirmities, their ignorance, cowardice, incredulity, doubtings, with extraordinary sincerity, which seducers use not to do, nor could they by such means hope to gain proselytes. They attribute nothing to their own

virtue, but utterly disclaim it, giving all the glory to God.[1]

Another argument of infallible proof may be, that most of what our Saviour did was foretold He should do. Above all, the miracle of His Resurrection, without which all His other miracles had been to little purpose, was attested not only by those women, who went to be spectators, or by His disciples only, or by unbelievers (for such was the mass at that time), but was seen alike by five hundred brethren at once.[2]

Lastly, how great and stupendous needs must be that power and virtue, which can give such gifts to men as He did to His servants, empowering others not only to do what be fit, but even so great miracles. For such an effect had the preaching of His Resurrection, that within forty days after it, such multitudes embraced the Faith, as that no fewer than three thousand were converted at one plain Sermon of St. Peter's.[3] Such was the effusion of His Holy Spirit upon those truly gifted men; and by such signs and miracles does St. Paul justify his vocation. Nay, with such energy did this virtue exert itself, that miracles were done, not only by the touch and reliques, but by the very shadow of His Apostles.[4]

But, to return to those of our Blessed Saviour: such they were, as none but the Supreme and Absolute Master and God of Nature could have effected: such as far surpassed the power of material causes, yea, and of any substance separate from matter; as, for in-

[1] Acts, iii., 12; vii., 51; viii., 22, 23.
[2] I. Cor., xv., 6.
[3] Acts, ii., 41.
[4] Acts, v., 15.

tance, the creation of bread in the hands of His disciples who distributed it,—the healing of diseases at a distance, and without topical application,—the doing those things at an instant by a word spoken,—souls to re-enter dead bodies, — subjugating infernal spirits; and then to communicate all this power by breathing only upon His Apostles!

As for what the Pagans and others pretend,—what is their number? what their evidence? What sect or religion have they established by them? And why have those Miracles of Christ so prevailed over them, as even to draw these pretenders over to His party, so as to cause them to burn their most curious and costly books of art.[1] In a word, either, then, those miracles which Christians affirm to have been done, were done, or were not done. If done, there is all the reason in the world to believe them; if not, the miracle is yet the greater, that without a miracle it should so prevail.

But, to proceed to further instances: the veil of the Temple was rent. But how was it possible they should impose an event so remarkable upon so many thousands, writing so confidently, whilst that stately edifice was standing, and while those persons were yet living, who might so easily have contradicted it, namely, more than a hundred thousand witnesses? How should they dare affirm a circumstance so notorious, on purpose to deceive those to whom our Blessed Saviour preached at Jerusalem, with any forehead or colour of hopes to persuade? This alone is unanswerable.

But, supposing there were no other miraculous proof

[1] Acts, xix., 19.

of His Divinity, and the religion He came to promulge, but that single one, His Resurrection, it had been, beyond all contradiction, sufficient; it being the prime Article which justifies His commission. This, therefore, it pleased Almighty God to give us the most unquestionable assurance of, of which any thing past is possibly capable, seeing the fact can but once be done; nor needs it. For, first, the ocular were not (as we said) one or two, but five hundred at once; and several others, at several times, of irreproachable credit, and such as not only saw, but eat, drank, and conversed with him. Such numbers these, as liars do not use to appeal to. Nor is it possible so many should agree in an untruth for no gain, but ruin; no man is wicked for nothing but reproaches.

Now, what imaginable interest could such persons have to spread a lie, and assert it to the very death? Why endure such bonds, imprisonments, stripes, losses, banishments, unspeakable tortures, martyrdoms, and cruel deaths, rather than deny it? The persecution to suppress this doctrine being so raging, that more were found to perish for asserting it, than by all the wars, pestilences, and famines, throughout the then discovered world. Why believe we any history, so much likely to be written out of vainglory, flattery, reward, and which has nothing of the danger and difficulty which these poor men encountered? What should cause so much fondness in people to a poor, despicable, reputed malefactor, ignominiously put to death, and hanged as a slave, on a gibbet; the belief in whom made them ob-

noxious to all manner of contumely and misery, without any prospect or motive of advantage; and that not so much as one single person should ever be brought to confess the imposture? To men of ordinary prudence and vulgar understanding, the very instinct of self-preservation forbids so wild and unaccountable folly, as to seal a notorious untruth with their blood.

Besides, how safe had it been to contradict it, if false, by exposing the dead corpse; for, if He were not risen, He must have still been in the sepulchre, where they might have found and taken Him out; seeing, as for that wretched evasion of His being stolen by the disciple, whilst the watch were asleep, how could men who confessed they were asleep attest it? And how, if awake—how should such poor, mean, unarmed, cowardly men, who ran away from and deserted Him whilst alive, after He had shown them such proofs of His miraculous power, hazard themselves to rescue a corpse, watched by a guard of rude and armed soldiers? Besides, how could they have rolled away so vast and ponderous a stone, sealed and made sure, without making the least bustle or noise? Or how, I say, if all asleep at once, could they affirm so positively what became of Him; or how, indeed, durst they have confessed a thing for which they were sure to be severely punished by their officers? In earnest, the execution of so bold and magnificent an exploit, for these poor creatures to bear away our Saviour's dead body, guarded with such circumstances, and designed to alter and make such a change of religion in the world, of which it had posses-

sion for so many thousands of years, by such unlikely instruments,—as being neither princes, soldiers, politicians, statesmen, philosophers, great wits, or orators; but base, ignorant, poor, and abject persons, renouncing all the world,—were very unlikely. What should give them up to embrace halters, axes, fire, scourges, sword, exile, teeth of wild beasts, hatred, scorn, want in the utmost degree, and to suffer all the rage of the most truculent tyrants, and witty inventions of torments, for nothing but to propagate a lie? See what St. Paul (who was no sot, or ignorant) suffers for the testimony of this Article,—who was before a favourite of the High Priests and of his zealous countrymen! He was bound, imprisoned, scourged, stoned, shipwrecked, dragged from one tribunal to another, and at last beheaded. Methinks, the very remorse and despair of the unhappy Judas, making himself away so shamefully before any persecution happened to him,—whilst St. Paul and the rest rejoiced in their affliction,—were sufficient to convince one. For, had his gracious Master been a deceiver, would that miserable creature have taken it so to heart, to have betrayed Him, and not rather have gloried in it?

And can we imagine that Sergius, governor of Cyprus, Dionysius the Areopagite, Polycarp, Justin, Irenæus, Origen, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Cyprian, and multitudes of the most learned, prudent, and sober persons at that time, educated in the Pagan religion from their childhood, would, against all hopes of worldly interests, and to the peril and loss of all they

had, embrace Christianity, to worship One, who died so ignominious a death, unless, upon the most accurate inquiry possible to be made, they had found all to be true reported of Him? But, in a word, the testimony of His miracles was so evident, that neither Celsus, nor Julian, nor even the Jews themselves,—such as still adhered to the Mosaic Law,—could not but acknowledge Christ a Teacher sent from Heaven.

Wherefore, these instances are so absolutely unanswerable, that, had they not been asserted by those who saw them[1] with their eyes, the disciples and all the rest must have exceeded all the madmen and fools that ever were, to broach a fiction with so much peril to themselves, and for no manner of end.

To conclude this of the Resurrection: how great a miracle yet is it, that more men should be converted without them than with them! For, even of those who beheld with their own eyes the daily wonders He wrought, how few believed on him! Hindered by their ambition, love of riches, lust, pleasure, and cares of this world, which the austerities of the Christian Doctrine denounced. So that, even after the Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, in which the sensual glutton would persuade Abraham how effectual a preacher one raised and sent from the dead would prove, yet was that great miracle so slighted, that on the very day in which our Blessed Saviour resuscitated Lazarus from the grave, the spectators of it immediately sought how to put both the raiser and raised to death again.

[1] I. John, i., 1.

Let us here take notice, that the Life of our Blessed Saviour was not written by Himself (to avoid suspicion, nor in his life-time), but by others, yet by eye-witnesses, recording even their Master's bodily infirmities, hunger, thirst, lassitude, pain, pity, tears, want, receiving alms and help from others; in a word, subject to like passions, sin only excepted. Let us also consider His infinite caution, lest even his disciples, and those who were empowered to do such wonders, as to make even the spirits subject to them, should pride themselves; He bid them to rejoice not so much in these gifts and miracles, as in those spiritual gifts which make less appearance in the world and in the eyes of men; so that the woman who pronounced her so happy, that bare and gave him suck, could not at all gratify the least vanity in Him. They were blessed in His esteem, who heard and obeyed the Word of God, and whose names were written in Heaven; who were poor in spirit; who left all to follow Him.

To all these miracles we might add the wonderful and stupendous accession of people to the Church, in so short a time, with the effects and successes of the Holy Gospel on the lives of evil men, now and ever since converted to the Faith, and made heirs of life, subduing all the powers of the Devil, and the world which he had seduced, and which was so long rooted in ignorance and superstition, without other arms or artillery, than self-denial, humility, charity, patience, courage, and sufferings of their teachers. And that without human learning and studied eloquence; but by

the plain and honest endeavour of a few poor, despised fishermen, the most unlikely instruments to effect so strange and prodigious an alteration in the world, among scholars, princes, soldiers, the strongest, the wisest, craftiest, as well as the most vicious,—by a doctrine so averse from the corruptions of sinful men, as crucifying the flesh, pulling out the right eye, cutting off the right hand,—yet all this was done by these weak and despicable men, even to the pulling down of strongholds, and of every thing which advanced itself against the design of the Gospel.

I might farther insist on the miraculous Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, prophesied by Joel, which was not without such a cloud of witnesses, as comprehended people of all nations of the known and then discovered world, with its prodigious effects, as also of the splendid union of the Gentiles; with other wonderful passages of our Blessed Saviour's life; because they will many of them yet appear by the stupendous progress which His Holy Doctrine made. To which, as a miracle, comprehending nothing else but miracles, I now hasten.

3. BY THE WONDERFUL PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

Another mighty proof is the extraordinary progress which the Christian religion has made, in all places and countries, from so small and despicable a beginning, and in so short a time. To how goodly a stature this little infant is grown!

But to take our rise from its infancy: our Blessed Lord, till about the age of thirty years,[1] living a mean and humble life among his parents, and, as some affirm, working with His reputed father (who was a carpenter), making ploughs, and other necessary instruments of husbandry (as He who was hereafter to subact and cultivate the world), took not on him His public character till His baptism. After this, He went about preaching and interpreting the Moral Law, vindicating it from the false glosses and additions, which, in tract of time, corrupt and superstitious men had put upon it; and so, by degrees, insinuating the defects of the Mosaic Dispensation, to be completed in a better law, which He came to teach—proposing faith in Him and His mediatorship to be the way to eternal life. All these He confirms by wonderful miracles, convincing the gainsayers by the Scripture and prophecies which went before, and spake of Him. And this did He first in Galilee of the Gentiles, showing thereby (as Eusebius well notes) the calling of those ignorant nations; for which He so oft is found to converse among the Samaritans, and about the coast of Tyre and Sidon; so that, in a little time, His fame and doctrine spread as far as all Syria, nay, and beyond the Euphrates.

During this time, He had called and instructed twelve persons to be His disciples and apostles, endowed with fitting gifts to preach and propagate what He began. After three years spent in this ministry, about the

[1] The history of the life of Christ, His pre-existence and Divinity, we have in Euseb. Hist. Eccles., l. 1, c. 2, &c.

country, He went to Jerusalem, celebrated the Passover with His Apostles, and turned it into the Christian communion, as a perpetual memorial of His future Passion, and the seal of the Evangelical Covenant which He came to make.

Being hated by the Chief Priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, whose covetousness, oppression, and false doctrine, He had severely perstringed, they corrupted one of His disciples to betray Him. He suffered Himself to be taken, and, by malicious and perjured men, suborned to witness against Him, was arraigned as a malefactor, though the most innocent and harmless person that ever appeared upon the earth, even by the suffrage of the Judge before whom the implacable Jews accuse Him, and extort His condemnation to a shameful and painful death. After which, being miraculously raised from the grave, as He had foretold, He appeared alive, conversing again with His disciples no less than forty days. After which, having empowered His Apostles to plant His Gospel, and successors to govern His Church to the end of the world, He visibly ascended into heaven before them; and is there set down at the right hand of His Father; all things being put in subjection under Him; and where He is to be a glorified Mediator, till his coming to judge the world at the last day.

But the malice of the Jews stopped not here. St. Stephen's martyrdom, a zealous proselyte of the Apostles, and the persecution managed by Saul (afterwards a chosen vessel of Christ), dispersing the Church, greatly contributed to the propagation of the Gospel.

Nor did the Apostles altogether depart from Jerusalem, till twelve years after their Master's Ascension, (as we learn from Clemens Alexandrinus[1]) when they took their several districts, preaching in all places of the world, wherever they came; the nature of its precepts and sublime doctrine soon making converts of all sorts. Nothing was hid from the light and heat thereof; so that Justin Martyr gives us the account, that in his time, amongst the most uncivilized and barbarous nations, prayers were made in the name of Christ. All other leaders of sects and propagators of new religions being generally confined to particular countries, this new doctrine was found spread in all parts and places. And that, whereas all other religions and opinions of philosophers, not countenanced by the authorities, came to nothing, the Christian took root and prospered the more it was persecuted and oppressed. It prevailed against the strictest edicts of the emperors, vigilance of officers, arguments of sophists, and so crowded all places, that, as Tertullian affirms, should the Christians but of *his* early times have withdrawn themselves, the Roman empire, so abounding in people, would have remained a solitude, and been depopulated. It spread the faith through that State more in a few years than the conquests that victorious nation had made in so many hundred.[2]

To this add that most ancient sect of the Θεραπεύται in Egypt and other countries described by Philo, who, in

[1] Stromat, l. vi.

[2] See this abundantly proved by Valesius upon Eusebius.

all probability, were no other than a sort of poor Christians, renouncing the world to live in that institution; and were by no means of the Jewish Essenes, as Scaliger pretends.

The history of our Blessed Saviour's miraculous Conception, His Life, Doctrine, Miracles, Crucifixion, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, &c., were incredible as to their stupendous circumstances, and the belief of them so unlikely to prevail by the talk and address of a few ignorant fishermen on so learned and polished a world, so high, curious, and suspicious; and this acted among a people so malicious and jealous; and all this, in the face of His enemies, in the capital city of the nation; that nothing but a Divine assistance could have prevailed. That it should obtain, also, in an age of such professed Atheism and contempt of all religion, a world so given up to luxury, against which the Christian religion severely denounced, is truly wonderful. For never was the Roman empire so depraved; such villanies, injustice, oppression, and all sorts of vice, indulged and patronized, from the time of Julius Cæsar downwards; all ancient faith and Roman gallantry degenerated into craft, injustice, perfidy, lusts, and unheard of vice; against which this religion not only declared, but against the established religions of the whole world; yea, even against the Jewish, which had now been in possession (and that from God Himself) above two thousand years. All these it taught to extirpate and abolish as obsolete; so that nothing but the doing of miracles and wonders, greater than those of

Moses, or any pretended of the Heathen deities, could possibly have made any impression to the contrary.

Never was religion yet introduced with such contradiction, opposed with such spite by Jews and devils. The rulers took counsel to destroy the Blessed Author of it: Caiphas, John, Alexander, and the whole kindred of the High Priest, prohibiting the very mention of the name of Christ. They stoned Stephen, hauled the believers to prison. The Gentiles, chief men of the city, honourable women, and very craftsmen, were stirred up against the Apostles; whilst thousands of holy martyrs sealed the doctrine with their blood.[1]

Tertullian, reckoning up the several nations who embraced the Christian religion in his early days, names Sarmatians, Scythians, Indians, our Britain, and the Seræ, inhabiting the utmost corners of the earth, planted by these Apostles and Apostolic men with all imaginable hazard of their lives, during that rage of no less than ten persecutions of the most powerful emperors. Of these, the monster Nero was the beginner, about the sixty-fourth year of our Lord; when, setting the city of Rome on fire to oblige the people to build after a more magnificent form, by laying the fact on the poor Christians, he caused thousands to be murdered; Peter and Paul among the rest.

Under Domitian was the second;[2] the third, by

[1] For the sufferings of the Apostles and primitive Christians, and the miserable end of their persecutors, as Pilate, Herod, &c., see Euseb., l. 2, 3, 4, &c.

[2] A.D. 81.

Trajan,[1] who, though an excellent prince, had yet been enraged against the Christians, by the instigation of wicked men; whilst the younger Pliny, Governor and Proprætor of Pontus and Bithynia, gives him an account of their innocency, which procured them some relaxation. He acquaints the Emperor that the main of their error was, their assembling together at a certain stated day, where, early in the morning, they sang certain hymns to one Christ, as the God they worshipped; obliging themselves by oath to commit no wickedness, to abstain from adultery, theft; to keep faith inviolably, and to restore whatever was concredited to them; and, so departing, to meet again at a common meal of simple food, &c. Behold the heavy crimes laid against the innocent souls!

The fourth and fifth persecution was under Adrian[2] and Antoninus Pius;[3] learned and virtuous emperors, but possessed with the vulgar superstition, and fond of the ancient Heathen rites, which they found very much deserted. The temples and altars being almost forsaken, set the superstitious and crafty priests against them in all places, killing and tormenting persons of all sexes and ages; as the particulars are recorded by Eusebius, enough to melt a heart of iron. They were flayed, broiled, burnt, exposed to wild beasts, wearying their very tormentors with their patience and constancy; till, by the prayers of some Christian soldiers of that Prince's army obtaining a victory over the Quadi and Marcomani, by the extraordinary aid of thunder and

[1] A.D. 106. [2] A.D. 118. [3] A.D. 140.

lightning, they obtained some favour, and were afterwards known by the name of the *Thundering Legion.*

In the year [A.D.] 193 began that under Severus, when many noble martyrs perished. Then came Maximinus,[1] the seventh tyrant, a bloody butcher. The eighth was Decius,[2] yet more cruel, if possible. He tore their flesh with red-hot pincers; divers he impaled. It was in his time that Paul, a youth but of sixteen years, fled into Egypt, where he lived in a solitary cave to the age of one hundred and thirteen years.

The ninth persecution[3] was under Gallus and Valerianus,[4] in whose time no fewer than three hundred poor Christians, rather than do sacrifice to the idols, were sacrificed in a burning lime-pit. And so vehement was the zeal of others, seeing so many innocents suffer for the faith, that divers, professing that faith, voluntarily confessed it before the President and Governor; and, accordingly, were put to cruel death.

The tenth and last notorious Heathen persecution was under Dioclesian and Maximianus;[5] of which Eusebius gives a full relation, living himself in that time. There you will find how they were scourged to death, their flesh raked off with potsherds, some were crucified, some thrown to the lions, quartered and pulled to pieces by being scalded in boiling oil or lead. Under these suffered the famous Theban legion at *Octodurus,* in France, where the gallant men, who had so bravely fought and behaved themselves upon all

[1] A.D. 235. [2] A.D. 250. [3] A.D. 250.
[4] A.D. 257. [5] A.D. 300.

occasions, willingly resigned both their arms and lives, rather than do sacrifice or throw a grain of incense on the idol altar. Thousands of Christians, likewise, employed to build those enormous structures, magnificent baths, whose ruins are still extant at Rome, were all martyrized so soon as they had finished the work.

Thus, from Nero downwards, even to the reign of the great Constantine, did Satan muster all his forces against our Blessed Saviour and His followers. The Jews were the informers, going from place to place to raise persecutions against them, eager for the goods and spoils of the holy flock. Yet strove they through all difficulties, imprisonments, chains, gibbets, axes, fire, caldrons, gridirons, hooks, hot pincers, mixtures of fiery oil, teeth of wild beasts. If the Tiber swelled its banks upon any inundation, or the fruits were blasted, *Christianos ad leones*—"The Christians to the lions," was the cry. They lighted the streets in the dark nights, with burning Christians at every door. But neither thus could the old Serpent, seeking to devour the woman and her seed, after above four thousand years' contention for victory, obtain his purpose. The victory is now brought to the crisis, though pretending to such antiquity of possession, universality, and consent of nations; his tyranny and dominion, hitherto supported by laws, fortified by arms, asserted by imposturous wonders and magic arts (the spirits of darkness changing themselves into angels of light), have been overthrown; his arts discovered, legions of devils and devilish men put to flight; their ceremonies abolished,

their oracles silenced. But all this not without a severe struggle on Satan's part. He summoned all his forces, old and young, commanders, soldiers, princes, priests, councillors, judges, senates, ignorant and learned, and employed them to declaim against the cause.[1] They burnt all books and Bibles they could find; suppressed learning; forbade them to teach Christian children letters; used all manner of cunning and stratagem to root the very name of Christian out of the earth; nay, made a law that none should buy or sell, or draw so much as a little water to assuage their thirst, without *Thurification* and offering to the idol. They persecuted the Christians as traitors and sacrilegious persons; and the pro-consuls, and other governors, were directed to hear accusations, condemn, and execute them.

Thus was the Gospel of Peace persecuted, and the Messiah, who came to pacify all enmities, and make the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, the calf and young lion to lie down and feed together, and the sucking child to play upon the hole of the asp—to be opposed, and as much as in evil men and devils lay, to be utterly extirpated. When, after all this, there were raised up, even from among the Christians themselves, some worthies, who convinced them with their own weapons, not by the spirit of the sword, but by the sword of the spirit, the old serpent, the devil, Satan, who had so long deceived the world, fell like lightning.

[1] Celsus, Porphyry, Hierocles, Symmachus, Libanius, Julian, Lucian, great emperors, commanders, lawyers, and philosophers and wits of the time.

The Christian philosophers and divines[1] confounded the sophists and the wits.

The blood of so many martyrs impregnated the field of the Church, (as it were) never more fertile than when most persecuted. That sharp plough had prepared the glebe to receive the seed with more greediness, so that they were at last convinced it was in vain to fight any longer against heaven. They found that with the great weight they thought to suppress the palm, it did but rise the more triumphantly; and that the Christian philosophy had gotten more scholars and made more proselytes than all the philosophy and institutions of the Greeks had done in so many ages.[2] Lactantius shows that, whilst other criminals roar and cry out hideously when they are under execution, children, old men and young, tender and delicate virgins, endured the tortures without complaint or grievance, some of them singing in the midst of flames, suffering beyond all that they boast of their Regulus and Curtius, one of whom being ashamed to live a perpetual captive, the other, because he could not have escaped, seemed to die bravely; whilst innumerable Christians might, and would not, be delivered from the greatest torments, by flinging a little gum into the fire, or

[1] Justin Martyr, Origen, Apollinaris, Athenagoras, Cyprian, Tertullian, Eusebius, Lactantius, M. Felix, Prudentius, Chrysostom, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, Cyril, and others, against those Heathens we named, and innumerable others, assertors of the Christian doctrine.

[2] See Lactant., five Books of Instit., c. 13.

kissing a silly statue or piece of marble. What could it be but the mighty power of God which should work this prodigious change, give this courage, and the doing of wonders greater than had ever yet been done?

By the end of the first year of the Apostles' preaching, after their Master was ascended, the Gospel was spread throughout all the parts of Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bythinia, even to Illyricum; and within about half an age this contemptible atom of mustard-seed, scattered by a few illiterate fishermen, (of all other trades and employments the most stupid) grew into such branches, as overshadowed all the known world, even as far as our island, then esteemed the utmost limits of the earth.[1] For so these silly fishermen drew all good and bad into their drag, catching both the Roman emperors and empire itself. And so was fulfilled that of the Prophet: "The potentates of the earth hasted to the light, and kings to the brightness of His rising."[2] So mightily grew the Word of God, and increased.

It can, in my opinion, never be sufficiently admired, that those Pagan rites, owned and professed by the emperors and great men, (jealous of the least innovation) their temples built and adorned with such immense cost, curiosity, and magnificence, such as was that of the Ephesian Diana, should be subverted and rendered desolate by a sort of poor people, strangers, and wandering about the earth; and all this too, in

[1] See Pliny the younger, Epistle to the Emperor Trajan; Tertull. advers. Judæos, c. 2, 8. [2] Isaiah, lx., 3.

spite of the severest edicts, the zeal and fury of multitudes, the pride and envy of supercilious philosophers, and the avarice of Heathen priests, hating and persecuting this new sect: join to this the spite of the Jew and the diligence of the Gentile, who looked on it as coming to destroy their national religion. These are the most incontrovertible evidences of the truth of its Divine authority. I say, that an upstart institution so totally unassisted by secular power and interest, so repugnant to the vices of the time, education of men, laws, customs, the gallantry and splendour of the world, could not have been so soon embraced but by an over-ruling, omnipotent Disposer and influence, to convert and bend the contradictory and refractory minds of men, so prepossessed with inveterate errors, nor without the evidence of matter-of-fact, convincing the reason of such intelligent persons as it was preached to.

But thus that lofty Statue was broken to pieces by the stone cut out of the mountain, without hands;[1] the polity and force of all worldly monarchs, signified by this enormous Colossus, broken to pieces and demolished. By the preaching of the Gospel, this strong Jericho fell flat at the sound of rams' horns, and nothing was able to stand against it. Then tyrants were humbled, kings cast their crowns and resigned their sceptres at the feet of the crucified Jesus, and all the pomp and glory of Eastern monarchs hearkened to the fishers of Galilee. They were brought to make this notable change in the world by a few poor people, who having

[1] Dan., 2, 45.

neither interest, riches, strength, eloquence, friends, nor credit at home or abroad, were hated, whipped, persecuted, and put to infamous death: yet did they vanquish and bury all this strength, greatness, and glory of the most formidable empire that ever appeared upon earth, in the grave of a crucified Saviour. For the space of 300 years did the Jews and Heathens pursue Christians with all imaginable rage, as despisers of their gods; they raised stories of their killing and devouring their own children, as committers of incest with their mothers and sisters, as worshipping an ass's head, and things more infamous and filthy. All these their diabolical malice invented, to incense the rabble, till those learned apologists, men irreproachable for their virtue and knowledge, and other excellent persons, men of letters and reputation, so opened their eyes, that upon the strictest scrutiny, they could find nothing to charge them with. For let it be no mean argument of the Divine power and favour in the progress of the Christian religion, that it passed through such unheard of contradictions. It was to plant a new religion or doctrine, that would endure no other religion or doctrine but itself, though pleading prescription so many thousand years before it, and under such different and distant princes, interests, laws, and countries—a doctrine so averse and contradictory to corrupted nature, and the prejudices it entertained, as mortifying the flesh, pardoning, nay, loving our most malicious enemies. It condemned not only all actual sins, but evil thoughts, uncleanness of all sorts, and even lusts in

speculation. It forbade polygamy, an inveterate custom; simple fornication, (hardly esteemed a fault) and for faith, it was obliged to believe some things that appeared impossible, namely, the Incarnation, Resurrection, and other mysteries of our holy religion. It enjoined penance, self-abnegation, abstinence, alms.

In sum, no sect of philosophy obliged its votaries to so strict and severe a deportment; and all this, upon the credit of a person who was condemned and hanged as a slave, and of a few obscure followers, who had nothing of this world to countenance and support it. The disciples of this religion were not to stay till it were laid upon them, but to take up the Cross, if need were; to go to prisons, exiles, death; to take the spoiling of their goods cheerfully: strange invitations, one would think, to embrace an opinion, the maintaining whereof should cost its professors deaths and torments insufferable to flesh and blood, even of the most stout and courageous. Did ever any religion thrive upon such a stock, prosper by such a method? Cyrus, Plutarch tells us, inviting men to take up arms, (like Mahomet) promised them all manner of preferments, riches, and pleasures. Here, on the contrary, is nothing but disgrace, poverty, restraint, scorpions, and gibbets, fire and wild beasts; and yet this army of martyrs, this despised colony, went forth and won the field, planted the Cross on the thrones of princes, in spite of all terror and contradiction! Their sound went into all the world; such wisdom in reputed folly; such strength in weakness; such life in death itself!

Constantine having been miraculously converted,[1] and overthrowing Maxentius and Licinius, and the foolish efforts of all their soothsayers and augurs, demolishes the idol temples, abrogates their rites, and converts them to charities and the service of Christ. The oracle at Delphos confesses to Dioclesian himself, that certain righteous persons (meaning the Christians) hindered his responses.[2] He caused the Heathen images to be pulled down and dragged about the streets, to the derision of the people. The famous Apollonian tripos from Delphi, Pan, Venus, and other ridiculous deities, were flung about and dispersed. And thus the cause triumphed till the time of Julian, who, as all those persecuting emperors we named, came to untimely destinies.[3] He thought to have set up the old superstition, used execrable ceremonies, encouraged the Jews to rebuild their ruined Temple at Jerusalem; in which attempt fiery eruptions breaking out of the earth, as they were digging the foundation, burnt and destroyed the workmen. A truth so notorious, that St. Chrysostom makes use of it as a known thing, and happening about his time, as may be seen in his *Oration* to that miserable people. This was that apostate, who prohibited the teaching of letters to Christian children, who

[1] A.D. 300.

[2] See Constantius' letter to Eusebius, about this passage, and of what himself was eye-witness.

[3] Of which Lactantius gives a terrible account in his Treatise, *De mortibus persecutorum*, lately brought to light by the learned Balusius. [Stephen *Beluze*.]

encouraged the learned Jamblicus, Libanius, Maximus, Oribasius, and all the eloquent Pagans of his time, to declaim against the Christians. But all their rhetoric came to nothing; their advocates were foiled. The wretched Julian was slain by an unseen hand in the midst of battle, blaspheming as he died.

This was the last and utmost effort of the perishing Heathen religion and of the power of Satan; for Jovinian, Valentinian, and succeeding emperors, restoring what that miscreant had laboured to disturb, by degrees rooted up the very fibres of the Gentile superstition out of their dominions.[1] But well had it been with the Church had it received all this hardship from the Heathen only; there was yet behind a more terrible conflict and persecution from Christians themselves.

The sum, then, of all is this:—Christ, being the High Priest of our Profession, by God's immediate designation and appointment, our Prince and Saviour, for the propagation and progress of His religion, sent and gave some to be Apostles, some Prophets, and some Evangelists; others to be pastors and teachers,[2] for the perfecting of the saints, work of the ministry, the edifying the body of Christ, till we all should come to the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. These, according to their charge and mission, had the gift of

[1] Especially the most religious Theodosius, Gratian his predecessor, and Arcadius, as may be seen by the last of that prince's decrees to Ruffinus, the Prætorian prefect, which gave the fatal and happy blow.

[2] Ephes., iv., 11, 12, 13.

miracles, to heal diseases, dispossess evil spirits, and to plant the Gospel, govern and order the Churches founded by them. Of these our Saviour chose twelve to be Apostles, the word implying a *special Messenger*, *Ambassador*, *Proxy*, or *Commissioner*. The number was mysterious, as by divers analogies in Scripture. St. Augustine[1] fancies it relating to the four quarters of the world, three to each, denoting the Holy Trinity, in whose name they were to baptize and proselyte all nations. Tertullian and others resemble them to the twelve precious stones in Aaron's pectoral; to the stones taken out from the river Jordan by Joshua; to the twelve spies sent forth to search the land of Canaan, &c. But to pass these by; they rather seem to some to relate to the twelve Patriarchs of the Tribes; but St. Paul, added to this number, seems to interrupt this conceit; and, therefore, we leave it to the wisdom of God, who does nothing but for weighty reasons, though appearing not to us.

As to our concern; we find them immediately commissioned from our Saviour's very mouth; but they did not execute it so fully whilst their Lord and Master was with them. They baptized, indeed, and preached; but their circle was yet narrow, the time short, and to the Jews their countrymen only. But, after the Partition wall was down, the veil of the Temple rent, especially about A.D. 45, in the reign of Claudius—it was about this period they disposed themselves to preach to all the world, when He endowed them[2] with

[1] Serm. 3, in Ps. 103. [2] John, xx., 21-23.

the same power He himself received from the Father, and then it was unlimited and universal.

This wonderful progress of the Gospel by such unlikely means St. Chrysostom[1] convinces the Gentiles by, above all, the miracles recorded of our Saviour; these being past and invisible, that evident to all in his days. The like demonstration he uses to the Jews, who could not but acknowledge the matter of fact. To this add the spirit of prophecy, now utterly taken from the Jewish Church, and collated on them, when they received the gifts of tongues at Pentecost, as is especially conspicuous in what St. Paul has told us of the latter days and future state of the Church, to the understanding of all mysteries, that knowledge of the difficult places of Scripture (meaning the Old Testament) and expounding of the Word, preferred by St. Paul before the highest of spiritual gifts. And, accordingly, this continued in the Church, as appears by that of Justin Martyr to Trypho, to his age;[2] with ejecting devils, healing diseases, and even the raising of the dead. So Irenæus to the same effect.[3] And as to prophecy and gift of tongues,[4] "*Ipsi audivimus*," says St. Augustine, giving an account of what was performed at Hippo, Carthage, and about his own diocese, noting the very time, persons, places, &c.[5] Would we have more?

[1] Treatise on the Divinity of Christ, c. i. and xi. [2] A.D. 165.

[3] Irenæus, l. xxii., c. 5, 6; Euseb., l. iv., c. 7, &c.

[4] A.D. 410.

[5] Scio ego — cognosco ego — nos interfuimus, neque referre neque enumerare possumus, &c.

Moreover, they had the gift of discerning spirits, whether professors were real, or hypocrites; for our Blessed Saviour had frequently warned of false prophets and pretenders, who should impose upon the credulous. Thus they discovered the fraud of Ananias and Sapphira, Simon Magus; &c.[1]

Then had they, as we said, the gift of languages, absolutely necessary to the work of converting strangers and barbarous nations; together with the interpretation of unknown tongues; the Christian assemblies, at that time, consisting of so many different nations.[2] The power and virtue of healing without knowledge or skill in drugs, or medicinal applications, excepting a little oil, denoting the diffusion of spiritual graces.[3] But this, as Christianity began to spread, and stood in need of no further miraculous attestation, (for miracles are not for those who believe, but to convince infidels) was withheld, or rarely happened, as Christianity took place, and became almost universal, and so not needing it.

Lastly, they had *Virgam Apostolicam*,[4] a special and peculiar power of inflicting corporal punishments upon hypocrites and sinners, for the creating of reverence to their ministry, at this their first setting forth. Witness their animadversions upon Ananias and his wife, Elymas the sorcerer, the incestuous Corinthians, Hymenæus and Alexander, by sudden death, blindness, and excom-

[1] Acts, v., viii. [2] Acts, ii., 9, 10, 11.

[3] This continued till Tertullian's time, who speaks of Proculus having cured the Emperor Severus. [4] I. Cor., iv., 21.

munication, which, in those times, was wont to be accompanied with the Devil's actually possessing and tormenting the person so cut off from the Church.[1] Nor was this discipline other than necessary for that time, when it had no other power to protect and defend religion, and create for it that veneration which was due to so high an ordinance, but these extraordinary gifts; and which they had, also, faculty to derive on others. Yet no others of inferior orders could exercise it, it seeming to be confined to the Apostles alone. Neither was all this done in a hurry, haste, or tumult, but by gentle and sweet degrees. Many things were yet indulged to weak proselytes, not without convulsion to be wholly obliged to leave what had been so radically fixed in them, as prohibition of eating blood, things strangled, circumcision, &c.; some of which were connived at for some time, till they could digest the sound doctrine. So, as it is said, that Christ did decently bury the Jewish religion.

Thus, we have abundantly shown from what beginnings the doctrine and religion instituted by our Blessed Saviour, and substituted in place of that of the Jewish, spread through the whole world, was propagated and brought down to us, which, though but one continued miracle, as it were, yet is no more than necessarily it must have done, when we shall have looked into, and seriously considered the excellency and sublimity of its doctrine.

[1] I. Cor., v., 5.

4. BY THE EXCELLENCY OF ITS DOCTRINE.

PART. I. SUMMARY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

Now, to what shall we attribute the prevalency of this admirable religion, than (together with, and doubtless above, all we have hitherto produced in this chapter to recommend it) to the transcendent excellency of its doctrine, its design and end to assert its pedigree and Divine original. I say, beyond all; since even miracles do not so much render it credible or eligible, as its admirable precepts and institution. No philosophy, no light of nature, ever showed any thing so perfect as what our Saviour has taught.

Let us see what He has left us in those holy doctrines about preaching and instructing the people.

In that sermon,[1] He teaches and encourages to poverty of spirit and meekness, in opposition to pride and haughtiness, which, being the first and greatest sin, cast the rebellious angels out of heaven.—

He first begins with commanding them to hungering and thirsting after Righteousness.

To Mercifulness.

To Purity of heart.

To be Pacific.

To suffer persecution for Righteousness' sake and the Gospel.

To glorify God by our good example before men.

Not to be causelessly angry, or in any wise revile our brother, but to be of a reconcileable spirit.

Not to look upon a woman, to lust after her.

[1] Matt., v.

To pluck out the offending eye, to cut off the offending hand or foot, or whatever is most dear to us.

To beware of vain swearing and perjury, but perform our oaths and vows; and that our communications may be holy, and so sincere and faithful, that there might be no need of exacting oath at all.

Not to revenge ourselves.

To suffer injury rather than do any; to bear a loss rather than contend for every trifle.

To be charitable, and to give to them who want; to lend *gratis* to those who borrow.

To love our enemies, bless them who curse, do good to them who hate us; and labour for God-like perfection.

To give alms without ostentation.[1]

To pray in private, not to be seen of men, without vain repetitions; but to glorify God's name, that His kingdom may flourish, His will be done.

That we pray, depending on His Providence, to have food and maintenance sufficient for the day, without anxious solicitude, without fear of want; that our sins may be pardoned, as we are ready to forgive others; not to suffer us to fall into temptation, but to deliver us from all evil.

That we fast, not like hypocrites, with sad countenances, to gain opinion of men; but mortify ourselves in secret.

That we lay up treasure in heaven, that our hearts may be there also.

That we be not solicitously anxious for the future; but doing our duty, and, first seeking the kingdom of God, rely on God's Providence.

That we forbear rash judgment,[2] and to be censorious; but rather reform our own selves. That we do not prostitute holy things to the profane.

That we pray with fervency and perseverance.

[1] Matt., vi. [2] Ibid., vii.

That whatever we would men should do to us, we do the like to them, as on this depend both the Law and the Prophets.

That we strive to avoid the broad way and wide gate that leads to destruction.

That we be careful not to be misled by false prophets under the species of holiness, and that they are known by their fruits.

Not to fear those who are able to kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but Him who is able to do both.[1]

To love no earthly relation, in competition with God.

To take up the Cross, and follow Him.

That he who gives a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, shall not lose his reward.

That all manner of sins and blasphemy shall be forgiven but that against the Holy Ghost.[2]

That account shall be given for every idle word, at the day of Judgment; for that which goeth out of the mouth defileth the man.

That except we become as little children,[3] free of malice, humble and innocent, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.

That Christ came to save that which was lost; and that it is not the will of our Heavenly Father that any should perish.[4]

That when our brother do a fault, we should admonish him, and forgive him to seventy times seven.

That where two or three are convened in Christian unity and Christ's name, he will be in the midst of them.

That those whom God has joined together in holy matrimony may not be separated, except for fornication.[5]

That none is good but God alone.

That whoever forsakes the enjoyments of this life for His sake, shall be abundantly remunerated in that to come.

[1] St. Matt., x., 28. [2] Ibid., xii., 32-36.
[3] Ibid., xv., 11, 19, 20. [4] Ibid., xviii., 3-7.
[5] Ibid., xix., 9, 17, 20.

That whatever we shall ask in faith in His name, we shall receive.[1]

That we render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsars, and to God the things which are God's.[2]

That he who endures to the end shall be saved.[3]

That what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us.[4]

That not what enters in the body, but those evil thoughts which enter in and come from the heart, pollute the man.[5]

That we should have salt in ourselves, and be at peace with one another.

That those who trust in riches shall hardly be saved.[6]

That we should pray in charity; yea, to sell all, if need require, for the relief of the poor.

That we watch and pray, not knowing when our last hour may be, and the Judgment surprise us.

That He who believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.

That Christ was anointed to preach the Gospel to the poor, sent to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captive, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.[7]

That He came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

That they were blessed who should not be offended in Him.

That even the hairs of our head are numbered, so great is God's Providence over His elect.

That whosoever shall confess Him before men, him shall the Son of Man confess before the angels of God.

That we should take heed and beware of covetousness; for

[1] St. Matt., xxi., 22. [2] Ibid., xxii., 17. [3] Ibid., xxi., 13.
[4] Mark, iv., 24. [5] Ibid., vii., 19, 20; ix., 50.
[6] Ibid., x., 24; ix., 25; xiii., 33; xvi., 10.
[7] Luke, iv., 18; v., 32; vii., 23; xii., 7, 8, 15, 48; xiv., 8, 13, 14.

that a man's life consisted not in the abundance of the things he possesseth.

That to whom much is given, of Him much shall be required.

That we should choose the lowest room, when invited; and when we feast, call the poor and impotent, who cannot recompense us; that he who humbleth himself shall be exalted.

That joy shall be in heaven, in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth.[1]

That we should make ourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, and beware of avarice.

That what is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God.

That, when we shall have done all those things which are commanded us, we are unprofitable servants; and have done that which was our duty to do.

That the kingdom of God is within us.

Christ's Godhead.[2]

That except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

That God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

That God is a Spirit, and they who worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

That we should not labour for the meat which perishes, but for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life.

That He, the Bread of Life, came down from heaven, not to do His own will, but the will of the Father who sent Him.

That those who believe (that is, obey His commands), He will raise at the last day.

That we should not judge according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment.[3]

[1] Luke, xv., 18; xvi., 9, 14, 15; xvii., 10, 21.

[2] John, i.; iii., 3, 5, 16, 17, 36; iv., 29; vi., 27, 38, 40, 44, 48.

[3] Ibid., vii., 24; x., 14, 15; xii., 25; xiii., 34, 35; xiv., 6.

That He is the Good Shepherd, who lays down His life for His sheep.

That He who loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life, shall keep it to eternal life.

"A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. By this shall all men know, that you are my disciples, if ye love one another."

That He is the way, the truth, and the life; and that no man cometh to the Father but by Him.

Nor did our Blessed Lord teach any thing but what Himself recommended by His own practice. His sacred dictates were as legible in His life as in the Holy Scriptures; not a precept in his sermons which he did not illustrate by His example. Take we that summary and compendium of all that is divine and moral in His Sermon on the Mount; and where shall we find such a body of wisdom and reason amongst all the writings of the most pretending sects and the most refined philosophy. What counsels, what rules and noble maxims, shine in all his heavenly discourses! They are sprinkled through the Gospels, Epistles, and sacred pages, in wonderful, plentiful, sublime, and unsuspected truths, to justify His doctrine and the mysteries of our salvation!

Consider we the pains He took to instruct His disciples, letting no occasion pass, no accident, no object almost escape, which He did not turn and improve to our advantage, attributing the glory of all His illustrious miracles, stupendous works, and actions to His Heavenly Father only. He instructs us in the duties of humility, purity of heart, love and charity so uni-

versal and unconfined, as not to exclude our bitterest enemies and persecutors; virtues which no other religion or institution ever had notion of.

He exhorts us to pay obedience to parents, loyalty and tribute to princes and superiors; to be generously charitable; in a word, to do unto others as we would be done to; instructing, pardoning, healing, and continually going about to do good. For from the goodness, excellency, and perfection of the Author, nothing can proceed but what was good, perfect, and superexcellent. And therefore did none of His disciples exaggerate or panegyrize the accomplishments of their Great Master, but relate matter of fact only, simply, plainly, without affectation, as knowing that the purity and intrinsic value of the doctrine would raise admirers, and cause it to be readily received.

Let us go through the holy depositories with whom He left His Testament and Commands, and take a survey of what He did as well as taught; and there we shall find that the energy of a word only made men forsake all they had in the world, to follow Him. His doctrine showed who were *the blessed, the salt of the earth, the lights of the world.* He expounds and vindicates the law of God about killing, adultery, swearing, suffering wrong, charity, and labour after perfection.

He tells them *His* meat and drink was to do the will of God. He teaches what we are to believe, and how to worship the Deity;[1] and more is there said in two words, to discharge religion from superstition, than all

[1] Luke, v., 10; John, iv., 24.

the philosophy, divinity, and speculations of the world did ever hold out. Oh, stupendous mystery! He gives us the bread of life, that we may never hunger, and drink, that we thirst no more; and explains the wonder, and that the words which He spake, are spirit and life; the flesh profits nothing. What effusions of grace could any, save the God of Grace, utter in such melting, obliging, pathetic expressions! He pardons notorious sinners, feeds multitudes, heals all desperate diseases. He washes His disciples' very feet, even the traitor Judas's, to teach us humility, mutual love, and condescension. He forewarns Peter, comforts His sad disciples, shows them the way to bliss, promises the Holy Ghost; assures us our prayers shall be heard; prays for us Himself, and goes to prepare mansions, and that He will never leave His Church to the end of the world.

Who is able to read those dying and last words of our Blessed Jesus, without the most rapturous passion and transports of love and wonder? In sum, He intercedes for His malicious foes, and, expiring, prays His Father to forgive them who had nailed Him to the Cross, and used Him with such indignity. And thus have we His example as well as His precepts.

Pass we now from our Saviour to His Apostles, and those who heard His gracious words, and received His sacred dictates from His own mouth. They speak and teach no other doctrine; they live no other life.—

"That word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)—that Word, which was published throughout all Judea, and began

from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with Him—they were witnesses of; and of all things which He did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged upon a tree;[1] Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly; not unto all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to the Apostles, who did eat and drink with him after He rose from the dead. And He commanded them to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained of God to be judge of quick and dead. To Him give all the Prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believed in Him, shall receive remission of sins.

And that they might be able to do this,[2] when the day of Pentecost was fully come, and they were all with one accord in one place, suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty rushing wind; and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost; and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem devout men out of every nation under heaven. And when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language, by which they were able to preach unto all nations the doctrine of the Gospel which before was made known to the Jews only; but they, still rejecting it, they turned to the Gentiles (who were first called Christians at Antioch);[3] exhorting them to turn from idols unto the Living God, who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein; who, in times past, suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. (Nevertheless, He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good,

[1] Acts, x., 36-39. [2] Ibid., ii., 1, 12. [3] Ibid., xiii., 42, 46.

and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.) But now commandeth all men every where to repent; because He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man, whom He hath ordained, namely, the Lord Jesus.[1] And to confirm this, special miracles were, upon all occasions, wrought by the hands of the Apostles; their sound going into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.

With what sweetness does St. Paul treat his implacable enemies the Jews? With what admirable courage and patience do the rest of the Apostles go through their ministry! With what patient humility, temperance, charity, and indefatigable industry do they behave themselves! What nobler arguments can there be of the heavenly doctrine?—

"I beseech you, brethren, [says St. Paul][2] by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world, nor think of yourselves more highly than ye ought, but with sobriety. Let him that giveth, do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another. Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer. Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

Bless them who persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one towards another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low degree. Be not

[1] Acts, x., 30. [2] Rom., xii.

wise in your own conceits. Recompence no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. Revenge not yourselves; but rather give place to wrath. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink, &c. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Let every soul be subject to the higher power;[1] for there is no power, but of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the Power, resisteth the ordinance of God. Wherefore, ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but for conscience' sake. For this cause pay you tribute also—render, therefore, to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour. Owe no man anything, but to love one another. For he that loveth another, fulfilleth the Law.

The night is far spent; the day is at hand. Let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provisions for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Then, that men may not condemn one another in things indifferent, he exhorts us to follow after the things which make for peace and edification.

That the strong should bear with the weak, and not please themselves, after the example of Christ.

In his Epistles to the *Corinthians*,[2] he exhorts, If any man who is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

And taking notice of their going to law: Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do you not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?[3]

Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with

[1] Rom., xiii. [2] I. Cor., v., 11. [3] Ibid., vi., 7; iv., 20.

mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the Kingdom of God. What! know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in the body and in the spirit, which are God's.

Then, concerning marriage, continence, and virginity,[1] what admirable precepts and counsels! That they who had wives, be as those who had none; they that weep, as though they wept not; they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away. Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.[2] Give no offence—even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Covet earnestly the best things; and follow after charity.[3] For, if we speak with the tongue of men and angels, and have not charity, and have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith to remove mountains, and have not charity, (he shows) we are nothing. Nay, though we bestow all our goods, to relieve the poor, and give our bodies to be burned, and have not charity, it profits nothing.

Then he shows us the nature of this virtue: charity suffereth long, and is kind. Charity envyeth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. But now

[1] I. Cor., vii., 29, 30, 31, 32. [2] Ibid., x., 31, 32, 33.
[3] Ibid., xii, 31.; xiii., 1-9.

abideth faith, hope, charity; but the greatest of these is charity.

Then he discourses of the Resurrection, both of Christ and of the saints, which he proves by most urgent reasons, with the fruits and manner of it, throughout the whole fifteenth chapter. And then, treating of afflictions by his own example. We are troubled[1] (says he) on every side, but not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the Life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For which cause we faint not; but, though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen, are temporal; but the things which are not seen, are eternal. For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.[2] For we walk by faith, not by sight, and must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. That all things are of God, who hath reconciled the world to himself by Jesus Christ, not imputing these trespasses unto another. Having, therefore, these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.[3]

Then, to stir up a liberal contribution for the poor saints, he urges the example of Christ. That, though He was rich, yet, for our sakes, He became poor, that we, through His poverty,

[1] II. Cor., iv., 7. [2] Ibid., v., 1. [3] Ibid., vii., 1.

might be rich.[1] And that if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not (c. ix., 7). And would have provision made for honest and decent things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

In his Epistle to the Galatians, he shows that he received not this doctrine from man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ;[2] and shows how we are not sanctified by the Law, but by faith in Christ. And that, though an angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel than that the Apostle preached, he should be accursed. And proceeds to describe the hostility between the flesh and the spirit, the fruits of which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against which there is no law. And that they who are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

In the next period, he moves to gentleness towards those who have slipped.[3] If a man be overtaken in a fault, he should be restored in the spirit of meekness, considering our common frailty (II. Thess).

That we should bear one another's burdens; and so fulfil the Law of Christ. Let him that is taught in the Word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things. And not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. But, as we have opportunity, do good unto all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

In that to the *Ephesians*[4]—in the first chapter whereof he treats of the high mystery of Election and Adoption; and how Christ is set at the right hand of God the Father, far above all principalities and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, and hath all things put under his feet, being the head of the Church, which is his body. How we are quickened and saved by his grace, through faith, when

[1] II. Cor., viii., 9. [2] Gal., i., 8, 12; ii., 16; v., 17, 22, 24.
[3] Ibid., vi., 1. [4] Ephes., i.

Gentiles, and without God in the world. That He is our peace, having demolished the partition-wall, and reconciled us unto God, by his Cross, so as by Him we have access to the Father (iii. 12). And, being no more strangers and foreigners, are become fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, &c.

These mysteries, hid from the beginning of the world, never till now made known to the sons of men,[1] (he tells us) were now first revealed; namely, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and partakers in the promises of Christ by the Gospel. He cautions us against divisions and inconstancy; exhorts to put off the old man, and put on the new: to be angry without sin, that the sun go not down upon our wrath, neither give place to the Devil. That he who stole, steal no more; but work with his hands, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers. And grieve not the Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you with all malice: and be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us.

That neither fornication, uncleanness, or covetousness, should so much as be named among saints, nor so much as foolish vain talking, or jesting; but rather giving of thanks, walking circumspectly, redeeming the time.[2]

In his Epistle to the *Philippians*[3], exhorting to unity and other graces. Let nothing (says he) be done through strife or in vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other

[1] Ephes., iii., 5, 6; iv., 24-32. [2] Ibid., v., 3, 15, 16.

[3] Phil., ii., 3, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15.

better than themselves, after the example of Christ, who, being in the form of God, and equal with God, made himself of no reputation; but took (emptying himself) upon him the form of a servant; yea, so humbled himself, as to become obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.

Do all things without murmuring, that ye may be blameless and harmless, and without rebuke.

Rejoice in the Lord. Let your moderation be known to all men. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

Finally, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, if there be any virtue, if any praise, think on these things. What can be more divine?[1]

To the *Colossians*,[2] what an admirable description is there of our Blessed Saviour, and of the infinite benefits of his Redemption! His blotting out the handwriting that was against us, and nailing it to his Cross, and exempting us from the legal ceremonies of meats, drinks, days, &c., which were shadows of things to come;[3] exhorting us to put off anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, not lie to one another; but (as the Elect of God) to put on bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, with all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing, with grace in your hearts, to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. That wives submit to their own husbands; husbands to love their wives, and not to be bitter against them (Ephes., v., 25-33). That children honour and obey their parents in all things (Ephes., v., 1, 2). That fathers provoke them not to anger, lest they be

[1] Phil., iv., 4-6, 8. [2] Coloss., i., 15, 22. [3] Ibid., iii., 1, 2, 8, 9, 12.

discouraged; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. That servants obey their masters, not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, as to Christ, fearing God, who will reward it.[1] In the mean time, that masters give them that which is equal and just, forbearing threatening, knowing they have a Master in Heaven, who has no respect of persons.

That we should continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving, walking discreetly among them who are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

Then, in the First Epistle to the *Thessalonians*,[2] the same Apostle proceeds with exhortations to purity and sanctification. That no man go beyond, and defraud or overreach his brother in any matter. That Christians study to be quiet, and do their own business, and work with their own hands, that they may have lack of nothing. Nor sorrow for the dead, as those who have no hope, comforting them with an assured resurrection, describing the manna of it, and Christ's glorious and sudden coming. And therefore how necessary it is to be watchful and sober, to warn them who are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, to be patient towards all men, to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, in every thing to give thanks, not to quench the spirit, nor despise prophecy, but to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good: nay, to abstain from all appearance of evil.

In the Second Epistle,[3] continuing his description of the dreadful Judgment, warns them of the general defection, at the coming of Antichrist, previous to the coming of our Saviour at the last day.

In his two Epistles to Timothy, he exhorts that first of all supplications, prayer and intercession, and giving of thanks,

[1] Coloss., iv., 1, 5, 6. [2] I. Thess., iv., 6; v., 3, 4.
[3] II. Thess., i., ii.

be made for all men: for kings and all in authority, that we may lead a quiet, peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty, as a thing acceptable to God, who will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; there being one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all.

In like manner, also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, as becomes women professing godliness, with good works. That they learn in silence with all subjection. That they presume not to teach in the Church, as being first in the transgression; that, notwithstanding, she shall be saved in child-bearing, if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety.

Then, in the next chapter,[1] he teaches who Bishops and Deacons should demean themselves, and govern and minister in the Church. That they be blameless, vigilant, sober, given to hospitality, apt to teach, no strikers, not greedy of filthy lucre, impatient, or covetous; ruling his own house well, that they may know how to take care of the Church, lest they be conceited; not given to much wine, that they may know how to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And then shows, that great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified of the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up to glory.

Thence proceeds he to show the apostacy of the latter times,[2] teaching the doctrine of devils, forbidding to marry and to abstain from meats and other indifferent things, obtruding profane and old wives' fables and bodily exercises, &c., (II. Tim., iii.)

Then gives rules for the reproving of others;[3] that elderly people should be entreated as fathers and mothers, the younger as brethren and sisters, with all purity; that real widows be

[1] II. Thess., iii. [2] Ibid., iv. [3] Ibid., v.

honoured, and their children taught to requite their parents; and if any provide not for his own house, he is worse than an infidel. He also describes such as are to be imputed widows, indeed, well reported of for good works, if she have brought up children, lodged strangers, washed the saints' feet, relieved the afflicted, and followed every good work. Giving a character of the younger idle widows, tatlers, and busybodies. How the young should marry, bear children, guide the house, and give no occasion of reproach. Then, that the Bishops should rebuke them that sin, that others may take warning, and do all things impartially; nor lay hands (to ordain or absolve others) suddenly on none, or be partaker of other men's sins.

He proceeds to show how godliness, with contentedness, is great gain;[1] and that, having brought nothing into the world, having food and raiment, we should therewith be content. For that they who will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition; the love of money being the root of all evil, which, while some coveted after, they erred from the Faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. He therefore charges the rich, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the Living God, who gives us all things richly to enjoy. That they do good, be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold of eternal life.

In the Second Epistle,[2] he shows how Christ has abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light, through the Gospel. That all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

He charges Timothy[3] to preach the Word, to be instant in

[1] II. Thess., vi. [2] II. Tim., i. [3] Ibid., iv.

season, out of season, to reprove, rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine; warning him of the perverseness of men.

In like manner to Titus,[1] (Bishop of Crete) he shows how the ministers of the Gospel should behave themselves, that they may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gainsayers. And then proceeds to give precepts how all sorts of Christians should live:[2] that the aged be grave, sober, temperate, sound in the faith; that young women be sober, discreet, chaste, keepers at home, obedient to their husbands; that servants, being reproved, answer not again; that they purloin nothing. For that the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of that Great God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

In the following chapter,[3] he puts them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates (though they were at that time Heathens), and to speak evil of no man; considering what God our Saviour has called us to, by His infinite kindness and love; not for works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs of eternal life.

In his Epistle to *Philemon*,[4] see what bowels of charity to a repenting fugitive servant, whom he reconciles to his master.

The Epistle to the *Hebrews*[5]—whether St. Paul's, or of any other Christian author—in the first chapter, describes the incomparable person of our Saviour, by whom He has in these last days spoken to us. He shows us how He made the

[1] Tit., i. [2] Ibid., ii. [3] Tit., iii.
[4] Philem. [5] Hebrews.

worlds; who, being the Son of God, the heir of all things, is the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, upholding all things by the word of His power, and, having purged our sins, is set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, as being in pre-eminence infinitely higher than the angels, who are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. By this exaggerating the infinite condescension of our Saviour's exinanition, in that being so great a person, He should take upon Himself, and suffer in our nature. And thence infers the danger of infidelity, by the bad example of the Jews. For that the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,[1] piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. And that, since we have such an High Priest, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God,[2] we should hold fast our profession. He shows the great preference of our Saviour's Priesthood to all the Legal High Priests, who were but temporal, and could not, with all their sacrifices, oblations, and intercessions, by reason of their infirmities, make any thing perfect (vii., 27, 28).

But Christ, though in all things tempted like us, was yet without sin. That, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong cries and tears for us unto God, though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience, by the things which He suffered; and, being made perfect, became the Author of eternal salvation unto all that obey Him.

He proceeds in the next to exalt our Saviour's priesthood[3] above the *Aaronical*, as being eternal and immortal, and employed about a better Covenant, (viii., 6) as being able to save

[1] Heb., iv. [2] Ibid., v. [3] Ibid., vi.

them to the uttermost,[1] that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for us. For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, blameless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.

In the next three chapters,[2] describing the rites of these sanguinary sacrifices under the law, and their great insufficiency, as being figures, to remain only till the time of the reformation, that is, till Christ should come an High Priest of better things. For, if the bloods of bulls and goats under the law, expiatory to the purifying of the flesh, (farther than which it did not reach) how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge our conscience from dead works, to serve the Living God? Nor did He enter into the sanctuary (as did Aaron and his successors) with the blood of others; but now once in the end of the world He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed to me once to die, and after that, the Judgment; so Christ being once offered to bear the sins of many—to them who look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation. The same He pursues to confirm in the following chapter: showing that God had no pleasure in the legal sacrifices, as being impossible to take away sin, but as referring to Christ (Ps. xl., 6, &c.) Who by one offering hath perfected for ever them who are sanctified. Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way, he exhorts us to draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. To hold fast the profession of our faith, for the danger of wilfully sinning, after the knowledge of the truth, there being no more sacrifice for sin, and the dreadfulness of the punishment.

He shows what faith is,[3] and the efficacy of it, by the ex-

[1] Heb., vii. [2] Ibid., viii., ix., x. [3] Ibid., xi.

ample of the patriarchs and prophets, and other holy men, who in all ages suffered for it, in expectation of the reward of their patience and other virtues.[1] That being compassed with such a cloud of illustrious witnesses for our encouragement, we should run with patience the race which is set before us. Looking unto Jesus, the Author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before Him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. That, being now redeemed from the servitude and difficulties of a severe dispensation, we are by Christ admitted to Mount Sion, to the city of the Living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. To the general Assembly and Church of the First-born who are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel, &c. Concluding with sundry Christian admonitions concerning fraternal love.[2] That they should not forget to entertain strangers, for that thereby some have unawares received angels. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them that suffer affliction. Remember them who have the oversight of you, and have spoken unto you the Word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their converation: Be not carried away with divers and strange doctrines. To do good, and to distribute, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Thus far that holy Apostle and Author of these epistles.

Now we come to St. James,[3] whose epistle is full of Divine exhortation as to patience under the Cross; and that in trials and temptations we should not impute our frailties to God, who tempts no man, but that every man is tempted, when He is drawn away and enticed of his own lust. That we should be slow to speak, slow to wrath; doers of the Word, not

[1] Heb., xii. [2] Ibid., xiii. [3] James, i.

hearers only. That, if any man pretending to religion, bridles not his tongue, his religion is vain. For that true religion and undefiled before God is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. That we should not have respect to persons, and show partiality, but so speak and do as they that shall be judged by that perfect law of liberty.[1] For that he shall have judgment without mercy, who shows no mercy, and that faith without works is dead, and nothing worth; for even the devils believe and tremble. He advises that we should not be many masters; for that in many things we offend all, especially with the tongue, which is a fire, and full of a world of iniquity, and therefore to be severely bridled.[2]

Then he describes heavenly wisdom, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisy.

The following chapters declaim against avarice,[3] intemperance, pride, detraction, and censoriousness, and other vices, exhorting to patience, justice, and other virtues. Above all things, not to swear, but that our communication be simple, affirmative or negative. Is any afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing Psalms. Confess your faults mutually, and pray for one another, for the extraordinary effect of devout prayer by the example of Elias.

The like excellent lessons we have in the following Epistles of St. Peter,[4] where, treating of the incomparable mysteries of the Gospel, he shows how the very angels desire to look into them; and therefore exhorts Christians to sanctity and holiness of life in all conversation, that so we may resemble God, who is holy. That we shall pass our time here in pious fear, inasmuch as we were not redeemed with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was fore-ordained before

[1] James, ii.
[2] Ibid., iii.
[3] James, iv., v.
[4] I. Peter, i.

the foundation of the world. but was manifested in these last times to us who believe in God, that raised Him from the dead, &c.[1] Then he recommends obedience to magistrates. Honour all men, Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. That servants reverence their masters, suffering their frowardness after the example of our Master, Christ, who suffered for us, and who did no sin; yet, being reviled, reviled not again; but committed Himself to Him who judgeth righteously; who His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree; by whose stripes we are healed.

And the same holy Apostle[2] teaches husbands and wives their duties, to win one another by their chaste and holy conversation, rather than by plaiting their hair, and adorning themselves with jewels; but with meek and quiet spirits, which is, in the sight of God, of great price. That husbands likewise give honour to their wives, as to the weaker vessel, and as heirs together of the grace of life. In a word, that Christians should be all of one mind, compassionate to one another, to love as brethren, be pitiful and courteous, and always ready to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope which is in us.

In the following chapter[3] he exhorts us to bear persecution, patiently for the name of Christ, and to esteem it as a glory. But that none suffer as a malefactor, or busybody in other men's matters, which do not concern him. For that the time is coming, that judgment must begin at the house of God. And if it first begin there, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And, if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? Wherefore let them who suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator, casting all care upon Him, for He cares for us. Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom

[1] I Peter, ii. [2] Ibid., iii. [3] Ibid., iv.

we are to resist steadfast in the faith.[1] And he goes on in the following epistle, showing what precious promises are made to us in the Gospel, that by them we might be partakers of the Divine nature, by giving all diligence, and adding to faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, to patience godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity, giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure. For in this chapter the Apostle seriously professes that they did not follow cunningly devised fables, when they made known to us the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty, when receiving from God the Father, honour and glory, there came such a voice to Him, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this which came from heaven, they heard when they were with Him in the holy mountain. To confirm which yet more fully, they had, above all, that sure and illustrious word of prophecy, the Scriptures, no prophecy of which is of any private interpretation, nor did it (he tells us) come of old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; warning Christians of such false prophets,[2] as shall bring in damnable heresies, to the very denying of Christ. But that, as God spared not the lapsed angels, casting them down to hell and chains of darkness to the judgment day, nor indulged other notorious sinners, but reserving Noah and righteous Lot from ruin, so would He deliver His servants from temptation and evil, describing the manner of those seducers, that they may be avoided.[3] Then he proceeds to treat of our Saviour certainly coming to judgment against those wicked persons and those scoffers, who question and deride the promise of His coming, seeing so little alteration of things in the world, and that nature holds on her course, as if it should never have an end; not considering that, as the world was once destroyed for sin by

[1] II. Peter, i. [2] Ibid., ii. [3] Ibid., iii.

water, so the heavens and earth which are now, are but kept in store and reserved for a general conflagration, and the perdition of impious men at the last day. And thus God is not slack concerning His promise, (as some count slackness) for that a thousand years are but as a day to Him, but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but repent. For that, that day will come, as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works which are therein be burnt up. Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. And therefore it imports us to be diligent, that we may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless, &c.

After St. Peter comes the blessed disciple and evangelist, St. John,[1] still confirming the same thing, as to the truth of the Gospel, by the most undeniable and sensible demonstration. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life—declare we unto you; and that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sins; and that, if we confess them, we shall find mercy.

If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins and for the sins of the whole world.[2] That to know God, is to keep His Commandments, and love our brethren, and not the world. For all that is in the world, is but the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; and the world passes away, and all its enjoyments. Then, warning against *Anti-christian* seducers, he proceeds to describe the incomparable love of God to the faithful.

What manner of love[3] (says he, even in admiration at it)

[1] John, i. [2] Ibid., ii. [3] Ibid., iii.

hath the Father bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God? And what shall we farther be when Christ shall appear, namely, like to God Himself; and therefore, how highly it becomes those who have such hopes, to purify themselves, even as He is pure.

He shows that the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil. And that, as He laid down His life for us, so should we for our brethren, and therefore much more relieve their necessities, as a mark of our love to God.

In the chapter following,[1] he warns us of too forward credulity of such as boast of the spirits, and that therefore we should try them first. And then returns again to the magnifying the exceeding love of God; not that we loved Him; but He, us; and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. And if He so loved us, we ought to love one another. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God.[2] Lastly, concludes, by showing that the children of God overcome the world by faith, and that His Commandments are not grievous. Then he speaks of other mysteries.

St. Jude[3] also treats of the common salvation, and that we should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. It is from this Apostle that we learn how the angels who kept not their first state, but left their own habitations, are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. Then he describes the wickedness and horrible punishment of seducers, rebels, and voluptuous men.

Finally, in the former beloved Disciple's *Revelation*, we have not only a prophecy of what shall happen in the last times from the coming of the Antichrist to the last Judgment, full of prophecy and mystery, but many excellent lessons, encouraging the faithful to persevere to the end. We have there the description of what the Church shall suffer; of death, resur-

[1] John, iv. [2] Ibid., v. [3] Jude.

rection, judgment, hell, the heavenly Jerusalem, and the felicity of the saints, with a heavy curse to whomsoever shall presume to add to or detract from the Word of God and the Gospel of Christ, which this Divine Book seals up. And He who testifieth these things, saith surely, I come quickly. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

PART II. REFLECTIONS ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

This is the Christian Doctrine, and this their preaching, which we see was[1] not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power. They had the testimony of a good conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, they had their conversation in this world. And, though they walked in the flesh as mortal men, they did not walk after the flesh. Nor were the weapons of their warfare carnal, which did these great things, and wrought this change in the world by preaching the Gospel; but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

In a word, every thing in the Christian doctrine concurs to render its votaries happy, and infinitely to be preferred before any other religion whatsoever. For, besides temporal benedictions, it sanctifies the soul, establishes the heart, directs and encourages by example, and the highest rewards imaginable. So that

[1] I. Cor., ii., 4.

the Christian morals are not a simple idea alone of perfection, but real ones; not (as the law) written indeed, on stone, but engraven in men's consciences. It teaches to deny all ungodly and worldly lusts, pomps and vanities, and to live soberly and righteously in all godliness, honesty, and decency to all relations; to repress our exorbitant passions, to descend from our haughtiness, and to acknowledge every body our brother; to part from our possessions, rather than do wrong, and from our lives, than deny the Faith, or fail in works of justice and liberality, and to that degree as to send relief from the most distant parts of Greece to the distressed Saints, as far off as Jerusalem, whom they had never seen; to live with so universal a charity, as if the whole world had been but one family, and this, without the least ostentation. In a word, it raises the heart to the highest speculations, and renders it capable of the noblest impressions, having for its end the most glorious recompence.

Indeed, all these transcendant virtues did not continue in the Church without alloy and interruption after a while, by reason of human frailty, and the corruption of the times: Satan being more than ever concerned for his kingdom, which the Gospel did so terribly shake. But it pleased God it should prevail for a space, yea, and for some ages; and, like the sun, now and then under clouds, emerge and break out again, dissipating the darkness, and chasing away the mists; and shine it shall do more and more, maugre all the power of Hell, as long as sun and moon endure, yea, for ever and ever.

If we consider the sublimer Mysteries of the Christian Faith, they are such as eye never saw, ear never heard, or hath entered into the heart of man so much as to conceive. Objects infinitely above senses, yet highly rational: such the expiatory sacrifice of an Incarnate God; the Union Hypostatical; the Adorable Trinity; the Soul's Immortality; the Communion of Saints; Resurrection of the Dead; Remission of Sins; and Everlasting Life.

These are not the speculations of contemplative and mopish book-men, but truths and real things; not (as we said) contrary to sound reason, but above it, to humble our proud aspirings, and raise our veneration; to exercise our faith and other graces, not to gratify our sight and wanton curiosity, which were to take from the virtue, and consequently from the reward. Moreover, so proceeds it in order of nature, darkness before light, infancy before full stature, milk before strong meats, teaching before learning. It disciplines us to wisdom, not by starts and leaps, but by gentle degrees, from shadows to substances, from types to verities. And since the world, through its own wisdom, knew not these things, God was pleased that the reputed foolishness of His Doctrine should confound the wisdom of the wise in their own conceits.

Wherefore, to illustrate this truth the more, let us look back a little, and see what other the most famous and prevailing religions do afford, or can pretend to, in competition with the Christian.

SECTION IV.

CHRISTIANITY CONTRASTED WITH OTHER RELIGIONS.

1. SUPERIORITY OVER THE PAGAN RELIGION.

I begin with the Pagan and Gentile, the most refined and philosophical.[1] The ancient Greek and Roman religion was composed, we know, but of the raillery and fictions of poets, perverted imitations of ancient rites, by diabolical auguries, raking into the entrails of beasts, the flying of birds, and other vanities and superstitions, so exceedingly ridiculous, that Porphyry himself is in pain to explicate their fantastical, and, some of them, impious and abominable mysteries. Such were those of Ceres, Bacchus, Flora, and other secret rites, filthy, tumultuous, profane, cruel, and altogether barbarous. They were some of them performed in obscurity, and forbidden to be divulged, it being a shame so much as to speak of what was done in it. Whereas, that which Christ has taught us, is an open, manifest, and ingenuous profession, pure and chaste, sober and grave, and which discovers itself without any cloud or material veil, and is ashamed of nothing it either says or does, whilst it qualifies its followers to see, and to make known things invisible; even God himself, not by our outward senses, but an inward spiritual illumination. It acquaints us with the whole council of Heaven to our utmost capacity, and shows us how the Almighty governs

[1] We disdain to mention the stupid, ignorant, and totally barbarous, such as were and are yet among the uncivilized nations.

all things by His Providence, making evil subservient to good, and to do His will, even by the most averse and contrary means. The blinded Heathen, after all their scrutiny, could discover nothing but uncertain conjectures; and their oracular responses, after all their applications, were the cheats of their idolatrous Priests and Satanic impostors; and such as gave no heed to them, attributed all to chance and fortune.

The Pagans made their gods of mortal, vicious men; the Christians, of the holy and righteous Creator of all mankind: the Pagans made images of their gods, and dedicated to them temples; the Christian makes none of his; because with him every man is God's image, and the whole universe His temple. Cicero himself reproves the folly of the Pagan ceremonies, their cruelties, lying oracles, and ridiculous auguries; and some wondered they did not laugh at one another, when they were about their silly tricks and solemn impertinences; fitter to stupify and amuse the ignorant, than to instruct them, and to incur the derision and contempt of the wiser; and, having in them nothing of solid and true, they satisfied no doubts, established nothing of virtue, nothing of the soul's future state, nor whence she came, nor for what end, nor who or what to trust nor rely on, to whom of all their gods they should apply themselves, or whether to all of them in general, for fear of disobliging some particular one.

But, to pass by these more gross and unaccountable: we affirm, the most refined and philosophic Pagans came infinitely short of the Christian, both for truth

and sublimity; the most rational among them being more prone to worship and adore the sun and constellations, than the God who made the sun and all the stars; to celebrate cruel and bloody spectacles, lewd representations, feasts and debaucheries, to the honour of their idols and false deities, than to worship that spiritual Being, whom natural reason might tell them was not like to any thing made with hands and men's device; or to be conciliated by impure and human victims,—abstinence from certain meats, and other superstitious austerities, rather than to abstain from carnal lusts and other abominations—to give the fruit of their body for the sin of their soul, and sacrifice their children to devils, than mortify and kill their vices and sensual inclinations. The consideration of which made some of its votaries conclude the necessity of a purgative course; and, contemplating the pravity of human nature, to acknowledge it could not be cleansed and rectified by any ceremonies; but by some property in God, which Porphyry calls the Intellect of the Father, and Mundane Soul; but which, indeed, that apostate should have named the Wisdom of the Father, by whom He made the world; and does at last confess, that none of the Heathen ever showed the means of attaining it.

2. PHILOSOPHIC RELIGION.

As to the Philosophic Religion, so far does the Christian transcend it, that the very best of their morals have been taxed, and some deprehended in the most

abominable impurities. Socrates himself (as we showed) has been suspected, as well as the great Alcibiades. Diogenes was shameless; nay, even Trajan, Seneca, and others of the best reputation, were charged with avarice, pride, and covetousness. Against all which the Christian Religion not only denounces, but has given the greatest and most signal instances to the contrary, virtues, purity, charity, and humility, exalted to their highest pitch.

They will tell us, indeed, that their wise man should restrain the passions, and vanquish his inclinations; but assign no reason for it, beyond the ease and happiness of the present state. That sublime idea, which carries the sincere Christian to live as becomes him, they had no notion of. And, though some of them became even martyrs, rather than break their word, or do a dishonourable action, by which their country might be damnified (such as were Curtius, Regulus, Scævola, Lucretia, &c.), most of them had undoubtedly an eye to ostentation and the praise of men. Others made themselves away out of shame or fear; nor was Cato's and Cleopatra's true and real fortitude. And thus do the reduced Indian widows burn themselves on the funeral pile of their deceased husbands. Others fall down to a stone, that it may fall upon them, and the wheels of the idol-machine crush the adorers to pieces. And whence all this but out of a stupid zeal, or fantastic imagination of merit?

Tantùm Religio potuit suadere malorum!

Whilst the Christian sufferer is full of joy and assurance that, being a lover of God and virtue, his labour shall

not be in vain; knowing that there is a reward for the righteous. His zeal is not a sudden heat, a cold or remiss devotion, but a calm, sedate, constant, and uniform course of exemplary holiness.

The Christian Religion shows how impossible it is we should heal ourselves without some supernatural assistance, derived from God. While all the shining virtues and pretences of the moral Heathen were more in glittering show than real substance. They were too weak to eradicate evil habits; they knew not what self-abnegation meant. The poor philosopher despises what he would above all things attain to; and the rich held fast what he had gotten, still accumulating more, not to do his neighbours good, but to please himself. Seneca (if not foully traduced) was an instance of this; than whom there was no man more covetous in the midst of affluence. Others of them changed the object, but retained their vices. If they departed from, or mortified, one folly, they soon embraced another, from prodigal to covetous, from lust to perjury, from intemperance to incharity. And what religion now is that, which successively encounters these successive hydras (which spring as fast as they are cut down), but the Christian, whose principles are of another force? Some of the Philosophers, indeed, spake and lived with more sincerity; but the instances were few; and the strictest of their wise men recommended virtue but for temporal advantages, health and ease of life, without much regard to the dignity of the soul, the honour of its Creator, and a life and being to come.

Some of them celebrated commutative justice, mercy,

and other virtues; but did not practise it. They had no bowels, when objects of pity lay before them. They knew not what humility was, and their patience was pride, or a morose obstinacy. They fancied thought was free; took no account of the interior man; had little influence on the mind; sought to suppress no imaginative or speculative lusts, so they broke not out into actions. Whilst the Christian teaches us, that the divine justice, though impartial, is full of compassion, that the way to ascend on high is to begin at the lowest step, and to conquer and overcome by suffering. It instructs us, that God is our absolute Legislator, and takes account not only of our outward actions, but of all our thoughts and imaginations, and of what we do in secret. It fears not the reproach, nor to be seen or praised of man; but seeks to be approved of Him, who searches the heart and tries the reins. In a word, it acquiesces in the order of the Divine decrees; and therefore prays His will be done; endeavours that all we say, do, or so much as think, be true, righteous, and holy, tending to the glory of our Heavenly Master and Benefactor only, without reserve; nor this of necessity, but of choice.

Thus, there is no compare between the Pagan philosopher and the Christian, either for the sanctity and efficacy of the precepts, or the sublimity of its mysteries; which natural reason alone is too weak to fathom. For what can all its forces do, when the Christian proposes the objects of his faith to consist in things immortal and of eternal durance? Reason will never prove that the motion of matter can produce a thought,

or that it has parts indissoluble. Natural reason, indeed, prompts men to love themselves, nay, and our neighbours too, and God above all; and, in the first place, will carry us a great way to virtue; but so far has corrupt nature perverted it, for politic and selfish ends, that what we pretend to do, by virtue of our nature, is monstrously defective. The Heathen philosopher made a glittering and specious show to the world,[1] not to mention many heroic actions performed by divers of them. But there was (as we noted) a mixture of vanity, glory to themselves, love of their country and other interests, without regard to the glory of God, as the End of all. Whom, since they knew not, they indeed could not love, and consequently not serve with that entire and interior purity and rational obedience with which the Christian does, and which renders his service acceptable, and improves morality beyond all that their sages ever attained to. The Epicurean was sensual; the Stoic proud; the Academic always doubting and uncertain; Plato, ideal and visionary; whilst the Christian philosopher, transcending carnal reasonings, submits to the obedience of faith, and looks to things beyond the ken of sense, to things supernatural and altogether divine. She satisfies and fills the mind, without tumor and ostentation; puts a difference between material and animal, intellectual and spiritual, which are in perpetual hostility the one against the other; and comes away with triumph.

For, if the speculations of those daring sects be not

[1] The morals of Cato, Seneca, Epictetus, and others.

subdued, and rendered modest by the power and virtue of Christian and Evangelical grace, it does mischief to religion, whilst looking no farther than matter and the mechanic effects produced by that alone. Philosophic Religion rests in lines and circles; will have sensible demonstration for things which, though they fall not under the rules of geometry, and diagrams of Euclid, are yet as certain and true, as their most infallible axioms and conclusions. Had religion been prescribed us, to learn how to philosophize on the nature of things, the theory would have been accordingly of a more sublime and spiritual nature. But, since it is given us to sanctify our hearts, it is reasonable our contemplations should be governed by something practical, refining, and effective of a good and holy life, without vain curiosity. Philosophy is not satisfied to know and contemplate things spiritual after a spiritual way; but she will comprehend the manner of the operation by springs material, and gross resorts, which Almighty God thinks fit to reserve to Himself alone, and to draw a curtain over. It will (as one observes of the scholastic wits) divide and decide, define and distinguish, cut and confound with unintelligible and useless notions, till it falls into nonsense and contradictions.

The mysteries of the Christian philosophy, or religion rather, are hidden in God, who will exercise our faith, not our wanton curiosity, in things not subject to our senses. Philosophy, as it will never make us comprehend what God will have kept secret, and unto us incomprehensible, so neither ought we to surrogate

false and adscititious ornaments of worldly wisdom upon what the Divine Wisdom will have represented in a plain and humble dress. For, as there are depths and abysses where the elephant may swim, the plummet can never reach; so there are, on the other side, fords where the lamb may wade. The beguiling charms of distinctions and magnificent subtleties have spawned into prodigious monsters, and the birth of error; and the most genuine constructions and things perspicuous are miserably entangled, strained, and exalted into mysteries altogether absurd and unintelligible. Thus has man's curiosity, rashness, superstition, and interest of parties with the soldiers who crucified our Lord, torn in pieces his seamless garment.

Philosophy proposes to satisfy curiosity, the Christian religion to mortify it; philosophy would comprehend the modus and manner of things, religion is content to be modestly ignorant; philosophy is swelled with knowledge, religion humbled by it. Whether the earth move, as Copernicus held, or the sun stand still, to solve the miracle in Joshua, and the shadow of Ahaz's dial, concern not the credibility of Scripture. The sacred writers were to speak to the capacity of the people, not to the schemes of philosophers. They studied not the explanation of natural things, but to sanctify the persons and edify the hearers, since such matters and appearances could not otherwise be explained to vulgar capacities.

In a word, the Christian philosophy is great without pride, humble without objection, knowing without cu-

riosity; and thus the profoundest scholars, the greatest wits of the time, (despising the scandal of the Cross and ignominy of suffering) submitted to the holy doctrine of Jesus. Origen, Justin Martyr, Cyprian, Nazianzen, that great genius St. Augustine, besides many Platonists and others of the sublimest parts, persons who had both time, ingenuity, and abilities, to have searched and detected impostures from real truths, preferred the Christian religion before all the high notions and speculations of the philosopher, and the political interests of the crafty world.

Never had mortal man, furnished with all the advantages of philosophic learning, conceived or thought of such a mystery as the Incarnation of the Son of God, and the sending of Him in our nature to teach us the way to Heaven, His merciful intentions towards us, to expiate our sins, and fit us for pardon and salvation, and by incontrovertible proofs to confirm in us the assurance of immortality and a future state of bliss, of which all the philosophers and wise men in the world were still in dispute and doubt. And all this, though transcending our comprehension and reasoning from knowing things in their causes, yet (as we said) agreeable to it, since our reason by what it observes and knows of the visible world and its admirable order, the motions of the heavenly orbs, periodic seasons, and operations of the elements, structure and instinct of animals, the variety and perfume of plants, the beauty of flowers, and the admirable course of

God's ordinary Providence,[1] His divine power and wisdom appear so infinitely vast and surprising, that it could not have been but the work of some Almighty and perfect Being.

And, as the Christian religion informs us of God, above any other, so does it of ourselves, our nature, original, and end, which no reason or experience, nothing less than a revelation could ever do; as, that we were not produced spontaneously from the earth, (as Epicurus held) that our souls were inbreathed by God, and made to glorify Him; and it assures us that, by so doing, we shall be deemed capable of a supernatural and godlike being. It shows us how sadly the whole human race fell from that excellent state in which man was created, and of his recovery by grace, qualified to the attaining of that Supreme Good, which all the great philosophers racked their utmost wits about, not knowing what it was, or where to find it.

Christian religion prescribes the way by precepts the most rational and perfectly satisfactory, that ever any institution pretended to. It fills at once with content, joy, and satisfaction, so that a Heathen was wont to say of it, *Nil nisi justum suadet*, disposing to the severest virtue, and altering the temper and constitution of the most inveterate customs. It proclaims universal peace and goodwill,[2] and, in a word, has renewed the face of all the world.[3] And thus, indeed, has Christ

[1] Job, vii., 17. [2] Isaiah, vi., 6; lxv., 25; lxvi., 12.

[3] Ἐπανορθωτὴς τοῦ κοσμοῦ.

(as the wicked Jews said of the Christians upon another occasion) turned the world upside down by His coming amongst us. His Coming was called, ὁ μέλλων αἰών, the world to come, or the new world; all things were now become so. Men's natures were changed; their minds elevated to objects above the common pitch, pure and spiritual, worthy of our heaven-born original, our immortal souls, and to speculate beyond these petty fading things, which have no real substance in them. It fills us with that amiable virtue of charity, purity of heart, inward satisfaction and self-complacency: in short, with whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, lovely, and of good report; if there be any virtue, if any praise to think and endeavour after those things.[1]

3. THE JEWISH RELIGION.

As to the Jewish religion, it was made up of a busy and operose law of carnal ordinances, which had but a very dim prospect beyond the enjoyment of plenty and affluence, particularly confined to their own country. It was, at best, the shadow of a light to be displayed. All, as yet, lay hidden under the veil, which veil was to be done away by Christ. It consisted of innumerable, chargeable, and bloody rites; and, as the Apostle called them, beggarly and ignoble elements, in comparison with the Gospel.[2] It could by no expiation free from either guilt or punishment the presumptuous sinner, nor any other, but as every sacrifice had relation to that

[1] Phil., iv., 8. [2] Gal., iv., 9.

Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus, who takes away not the sins of a peculiar tribe or nation only, but of the world. The light of nature and conscience condemns every man who transgresses the law written in his heart.[1] But, as to pardon, nothing was more blind and silent, till it pleased God to select a people whose service He would accept for remission under a severe and rigorous law, exacting punctual obedience, and denouncing curses and condemnation to the breakers of it. Whilst the Evangelical dispensation pardoned all transgressions without exception, upon true and hearty repentance; and was that welcome message, which the deplorable state of mankind had so long thirsted after, and was in suspense about.[2]

The privileges the Jews enjoyed were confined to so small a corner and despicable a people, that hardly were they considered by the rest of the nations, who lay in profound ignorance, strangers to the Covenant and without God in the world. Nor could men have repaired from the ends of the earth to worship at Jerusalem, as by their law they were obliged, and as some neighbouring proselytes might. But what a handful were these to the rest of mankind, to whom by Christ the Gospel Covenant was applicable.[3] The Apostles having charge to go and disciple all nations, and accordingly their sound went unto the ends of the world, at the miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost, when so many and different nations were present to receive and disperse it

[1] Rom., i., 20. [2] Rom., iii., 25; II. Cor., iii.
[3] Matt., xxviii., 19; Rom., x., 18.

gratis. And they who were to worship but at one particular place, and offer but at one altar, may now make every place a temple;[1] and, instead of material sacrifices, offer the calves of their lips and the incense of their prayers, and for the fruits of the earth the fruits of good works.

Moreover, the Mosaic dispensation was but for a certain time; for, though in divers Scriptures it is said, it should be for ever, meaning the law, the Jubilee, the Holy City, as Canaan to the seed of Abraham, &c., the service of the Hebrew whose ear was bored, plainly show, by the event and period of all these, and the nature of the things themselves, that it was to end, and but conditional, and to continue no longer than the things signified came in place. And it is a rule among divines that, where such phrases occur, if applied to God, they denote eternity; where to men and other things, but for a time. Indeed, divers of their ceremonies lasted awhile after the coming of the Messiah; but they soon dwindled away, and lost their obligatory virtue. They were not at once forced out with violence by our indulgent Legislator, but used indifferently, in compliance with the as yet weak and scrupulous converts, who had long been trained up under them, but who were tenderly weaned from them by degrees.

The Jews were a people infinitely delighted with pompous and busy superstition, and had ordinances accordingly, whilst they remained under that childish pedagogy. But, as they grew more mature, they un-

[1] John, iv., 21, 23.

derstood better things, how easy and light the yoke of Christ was in comparison with that of Moses, abrogating those painful rites, circumcision, prohibition from certain meats, bloody and chargeable oblations, troublesome ablutions, and legal purifications upon every slight occasion, burdensome feasts, Sabbaths, and new moons, tedious annual journeyings, and a world of other ceremonies, which neither they nor their fathers were able any longer to support.[1]

The Jews had little light; the Gentiles less; and the most learned and sagacious of them came to no determination. Nor could the Jews, with all their legal rites, make their votaries perfect. But then comes our Blessed Saviour, and introduces a more manly and rational religion, more suitable and congruous to the Divine perfection and dignity of that nature, which Heaven had endowed with an immortal principle.[2] In sum, a better Covenant established on better promises. Theirs was carnal and worldly; the Christian, spiritual and eternal. What they groped after in the dark, our Jesus brought to light, convincing them of the excellency of His law, not only by the miracles which He did, (beyond all that ever pretended to them) but by a more excellent way,

[1] As to the later pretences, the Gnostic and Rabbinical dreams; that grand heresian, Simon Magus, Basilides, Menander, and that rabble of Novatus, (of which we shall give an account in the ensuing chapter) their doctrine was merely visionary and fantastic, extravagant, cruel, profane, and impure; and, though mingled with the Jewish, was yet nothing of the Mosaic religion, being established on sensuality, curiosity, or worldly ambition, and for politic ends.

[2] II. Tim., i., 10.

a doctrine leading to perfection, and worthy its great Maker; whose design is, to prepare and make us capable even of the Divine nature, and to be where He is, and to behold His glory.

In order to this, and to distinguish us from all other sects and institutions, we are taught by the Christian religion not only to watch over our actions, but our very thoughts; not to repose from corporeal labour, but obliged to employ both body and mind in the service of God; not to lust so much as in our eye, much less in our heart; not to give alms to our own countrymen only, but even to our enemies; not to revenge injuries, but to suffer them. Self-denial and taking up the Cross are lessons which Christians prefer before all the precepts of other religions; and as to the legal, see it all refined in our Saviour's sermon on the Mount. For, indeed, the Mosaic Law, as the Apostle tells us, made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope, by which we draw nigh unto God. And thus, baptism succeeded as a better Covenant; the first only putting away the pollution of the flesh and outward man;[1] the latter, of the spirit and inner man, even (as we said) to the very thoughts and imaginations, to the putting away the body of the sins of the flesh, by which is made a consummate suppletory to that bloody rite.

Thus did our Blessed Saviour not only free the Jews from this uneasy burden, but from all the rest, taking and nailing them to His Cross.[2] What, then, shall we Christians say, on contemplation of our privileges?—

[1] I. Pet., iii., 21; Col. ii., 12. [2] Col., ii., 14.

since, as no other religion has ever proposed such high mysteries, conveyed its truth in so admirable a doctrine, so neither has any such glorious rewards upon such easy terms. So true is that of Aquinas:[1] *Esset omnibus signis mirabilius, si ad credendum tam ardua, ad operandum tam difficilia, et ad sperandum tam alta, mundus absque mirabilibus signis inductus fuisset à simplicibus et ignobilibus hominibus.* Happy, then, are the eyes which see the things which we see! I tell you, (says our Blessed Lord) that many prophets and kings have desired to see these things, and have not seen them; and to hear these things which we hear, and have not heard them.[2]

4. THE MAHOMETAN.

Consider we next the *Mahometan.* Like that of the Pagan religion, they placed it in success and outward prosperity, judging by the event, and as it answers their worldly interests and temporal greatness; by arms and conquests; which, if an argument of truth, Alexander, Cæsar, and Tamerlane had been the founders of the best, because the most tyrannous and bloody; whilst the Christian glories in suffering in a just and righteous cause, nor can be induced to think the worse of his profession, for not prospering in this world; nor can he be compelled to abandon his faith, or change his sacred belief, whatever become of his outward concerns. He triumphs over the cross, and is never more a conqueror than in the midst of adversity. Besides the false prophecies of this impostor, his doctrine consists in

[1] Cont. Gent., l. i., c. 6. [2] Luke, x., 23, 24.

violence, ambition, prodigious and sensual pleasures, unworthy the name of religion.

5. SCEPTICISM CONSIDERED.

Come we, then, last of all, to our sceptic politician—the wary man, who doubts of all, and believes nothing but what he sees and touches. But we have made it appear how frivolous their demands are, and how unreasonable. The Machiavelists and Hobbians, and whoever else would be legislators, or give rules and precepts for the government of the world, are fain to suppose and recommend a religion, though it be a false and absurd one, as an ingredient among their politics; without which they are at a loss. Nor did ever any state or kingdom subsist without some religion, and the nearer that came to the Christian, ever the more prosperous; as might be demonstrated, not only through the Bible, but the histories of the ages since. Of this, Constantine, Charlemagne, Queen Elizabeth, &c., are conspicuous instances; and wherever it has been otherwise among the reformed, it has proceeded from a decay of zeal in the governors, their ill example, remissness, mingling or conniving with the corruptions of false religions, and advancing men of unsound or pernicious principles, as woeful experience shows us.

Hence that indifference for the truth, that shifting about and joining in affinities for secular ends; hence all the persecutions, perfidious acts, and oppressions amongst the potentates of this world. They will not

trust Almighty God, and rely upon His Providence, and the just and holy, the innocent and excellent rules which the Scripture and religion of Christ has recommended. And this, if they would observe, nothing were more easy than what they now are fain to support with all the wicked policies imaginable. There would be no rebellions, no war, no suits of law, no wants; nothing but obedience, peace, justice, and charity, and all the blessings of which the nature of men on earth were capable. So that all other religions, but the true Christian, are but the monstrous productions of men of craft, who, by nourishing them in ignorance and superstition, impose upon the credulous world. Whereas, the Christian is the production only of simple-dealing and disinterested men. The politician regards the people, for the most part, but as slaves to the mighty; whilst the true Christian esteems every one his brother without distinction, and accounts that the soul of the most despicable, in the eye of the world, is as precious to God as that of the greatest prince, and much the happier. With God is no respect of persons. So far is the Christian religion from this worldly policy, which looks on all religion as a mere tool, and expedient to keep mankind in fear and subjection; whilst the other enjoins us to obey, not only for fear, but for conscience' sake; and than this there can be no firmer obligation, as appears in their constant readiness to lay down and sacrifice their lives for the faith, which they profess to God-ward; and fidelity to their prince, when (though under cruel and persecuting pagans) it had

been easy for them to shake off the yoke, and vanquish the whole power of the empire itself.

In like manner, when eloquence, rhetoric, and all other adulatory and politic arts, apt to persuade, were abased to flattery, and to palliate designs to the prejudice of the truth, and came to nothing; the cunning men could never long bear up against the holy simplicity, where it was conducted by a sincere, upright, undisguised meaning and intention. All other religions flatter and soothe our corruptions, passions, and ungovernable lusts; the Christian is severe and nice, even to very thought and the most secret inclinations, which never any other religion took notice of. No mental reservation, no breaking of faith and promises, no versatility; but a constant, uniform progress in virtues and maxims, and whose politics will be found more prudent than the sublimest craft, more powerful than any secular grandeur, more efficacious than custom; in a word, something stronger than nature and all the world besides. It scorns to divert to shifts and cowardly stratagems; but purifies the very thoughts and inward man, and reforms the outward. It rectifies natural perverseness, breaks and supplies the stubborn and uncompliant, and alters even the very constitution; proposing an invariable rule, it sets up an impartial judge to be witness of all our actions, thoughts, and words, approving or condemning what we do well or ill. Nor does it even suffer us to be in quiet, till it has wrought out all that offends, and which is not nicely honest and sincere — prying into our darkest recesses,

and setting our faults as naked before us as if they were in the eye of the meridian sun; so that the true Christian is as careful of what appears not to the eye of men, as what they every day behold.

The Heathens, indeed, forbade actual adultery (and so do other false religions), but yet committed it. They sometimes punished the external act; Christians, the very thought of it; they in the fear of the eyes of other men; the Christian in awe of his own conscience.

6. ATHEISM.

But the *Atheist* is still behind, and is not convinced at all. The politician makes use of religion for his own ends; but this man defies all religion, and believes none at all. He believes no farther than he sees, and is sometimes so stupid as not to give credit to his own senses. Demonstration is *his* God; and, when it is made out to him, he denies the conclusion.

Had we only that plain and impartial way of delivering the doctrine of the Gospel, without flourish of rhetorical persuasion, it were enough to acquit it of imposture, or other design than of making us good and holy. We find the very authors who preached it so far from pride as to relate their own infirmities, and some of them shameful miscarriages, without any motive; concealing nothing of the poverty, ignominy, and little value the world had of their Lord and Master; but declaring how meanly He was born into the world, how poorly He lived, how wretchedly he suffered; which a setter-up of a new religion would have taken care to hide.

But His design was none of this; so careful He was to avoid all popularity and reputation from the greatest miracles that were ever done among the sons of men. They said nothing yet of any stratagem He used, to deliver Himself from the perfidious man who betrayed Him; nor any miracles He wrought to elude his persecutors, and escape the cross; which, doubtless, had been the more probable way, in all human opinion, to have celebrated His fame, and gotten Him proselytes. But His disciples honestly tell the world how tamely He was taken, betrayed, led away, bound, scourged, mocked, and at last crucified like a slave, leaving His disciples and followers exposed to the same disgraces and difficulties. Had not His religion been true and from Heaven, impossible would it have been to have been so universally planted and received by learned, scrupulous, and considerate men; a Doctrine so contrary to the opinions and prejudices of men, and the religion so long established; a religion so averse to flesh and blood, so hated, published by such mean people, without craft, eloquence, or human learning. But that it should, with once telling a naked story, proselyte such multitudes of men, of all sorts and interests—rich, noble, great, learned, and so unlikely to be imposed upon; to so far prevail, as to abandon all those circumstances, to embrace it with the hazard of their lives, without evident advantage, either of glory, riches, or power; but, instead of these, ignominy and the last of worldly sufferings:—is it, I say, credible that men should lose whatsoever is dear to us in this world for

the most exquisite tortures which cruel men could invent in defence of a lie?

How, then, is it possible we should mistrust the integrity of these honest and faithful witnesses whose writings have passed down to us as theirs, from the first age they were penned in, and quoted by so many learned, holy, and inquisitive persons from the time of the Apostles to our own? And why did none who lived and writ other books and passages near that age never once contradict the forgery, had there any been?

Nor rest we on the bare report of Christians only, but even of the very Heathen—some of them notorious enemies, and near that time; none of whom had the impudence to deny any of our Saviour's miracles as matters of fact, though attributing them to natural causes or magical arts. Indeed, the Gospel is as stupendous in its propagation the first century; but so (as the Atheists say) has the Mahometan been. But it is then to be considered how different the means have been which introduced them! The Christian religion, by meekness and suffering; the Turkish, by rebellion and arms; the Christian religion, by renouncing the world and the pleasures of this life; the Mahometan, by force and fraud, to possess the world and the enjoyment of all its delights here, and promising more exalted sensual pleasures hereafter. It is also considerable, that the Christian religion was not born with the professors of it; but learned and received from credible persons, after Christ's Ascension, who sealed their faith with their blood; and that such a person there was as

Christ, and He put to death by their predecessors, the Jews universally to this day acknowledge. This was long since noted by St. Augustine, about the recension of that ancient tax, when Cyrenius was governor. In the mean time, plainly surprising it is, that those who, beholding the miracles our Blessed Saviour did, and thinking of nothing but temporal prosperity, expecting every moment when their Messiah should come and deliver their nation from the Roman yoke, and set up His pompous kingdom, should hear of nothing from Him but a doctrine of sufferings, and at last see Him nailed, like an impostor and a slave, to the Cross (a death accursed by their own law), and all their hopes and expectations blasted on the sudden; and, consequently, (in a manner) quite giving over their late confidence, should immediately, in the height of the disappointment (in which all their hopes were, in a manner, dead and buried), faint-hearted, preach up a fable, that they must needs foresee would prove so dangerous; to assert Him to be a God, raised from the dead, and His deadly wounds, to life, whom the whole city and country saw publicly executed; and so accuse the Sanhedrim and Supreme Council of murdering the Messiah, and persist in all this to the death;—that, I say, after all these contradictions, they should be so mad as to believe wise and learned men would give any credit to what they affirmed.

All this yet was true, and hitherto has no doubt as to fact. Their speaking several languages, untaught and on the sudden (by which these truths were propagated),

was so evident, that the sound of it was heard over almost all the several nations under the Roman empire. And the doctrine evangelized was so new and admirable a moral and sublime philosophy, that their very enemies were in admiration of its purity, far exceeding what had been taught them in their schools; simple fishers and very idiots, confounding all the politer and choice learning of the most flourishing academies; reducing both Jewish, Pagan, and profane religions to the doctrine of the Gospel, which spake of nothing more than poverty, shame, prisons, chains, scourges, fire and sword, to the embracers of it. If, then, this religion had been false, it would have found few desirous to embrace it. But thus did the Christian religion prevail against all these prejudices, and its truth was confirmed by miracles, many of them done for several years after our Lord's Ascension, in the sight of its greatest enemies. And this new Institution baffled all the power and malice of Satan, and withstood the derision of the strongest wits, the disputes of gainsayers, and the cruelty of tyrants.

To this let us add the Prophecies of the Old Testament, which went so long before; the dispersion of the Jewish nation; the silence of devilish oracles; the holy lives, wonderful charity, constancy and suffering of martyrs and confessors; the Father's testimony of His Son, and the truth of His mission, when at Jordan; and on the Holy Mount, when that voice came from Heaven, heard by those present; and, above all, its operations upon the hearts and lives of men to sanctifi-

cation, peace of conscience, and abundant consolation of those who received it.[1] Nor may we here pass by the uninterrupted succession of His followers, the holy Bishops and others, from the Apostles to this day; all whose names we find diligently recorded and transmitted, averring the same doctrine and faith as were primarily received from Christ our Lord himself: which no other false religion ever could do.

Eusebius names the particular Churches which they planted and presided over, and their authentic letters still extant to his time. To these he sends the heretics and incredulous for conviction, as well as for their innovations; and this from indubitable authors, St. Clement, Polycarp, Ignatius, and others; whose genuine writings are abundantly vindicated, and the conversation of Polycarp with St. John, Irenæus with Polycarp, Philotinus, Papias, Quadratus, Aristides, Ægesippus, and others; giving all irrefragable testimony of the same faith and religion, as persons themselves familiar and contemporary with the Apostles, or with those who were. All these particulars, concurring in such a cloud of witnesses, must needs evince the truth and excellency of the Christian religion against all shadow of reasonable contradiction and infidelity.

1 Their own books (namely, of the Jews) pointed so evidently to the Messiah, at this time of general expectation among them, that, to encounter the impossibilities of not owning the Lord Jesus to be Him, they are forced to admit of a double Messiah, one suffering, another triumphant. Their earnest hopes of one at that period, —which the preaching of John the Baptist confirms, and their curious questioning of that holy man,—they themselves acknowledge.

And now, as for those who for all this will take nothing, save what they have mathematical demonstrations for. All that can be said to such is, that they are most brutishly unreasonable; since other evidence in things of this nature neither need nor ought to be given; and men must either believe very little, or nothing at all, that has passed these five thousand years before them; and would deservedly be looked on as the most impertinent of mankind to require all that has been done and acted, to be repeated every generation, and to every individual person born all that tract of time. There is no one action which has been performed during all that great revolution, which is able to produce so clear a testimony of the truth of it, as what the Sacred Scriptures have handed to us. For there are in nature but two ways of conciliating the belief of a thing past, and compelling assent—miracles and tradition. As to the former, we have shown the unreasonableness, rather madness, to exact them daily (though such great and even stupendous ones daily manifest themselves, of which, for all that, we take no regard, nor are at all the better for, by reason of the commonness of them, such as, for instance, the effects of God's ordinary Providence in the works of His hands). What a frenzy were it for every one, born and baptized during so many successive generations, to call for miracles, till he were pleased to believe the Holy Scriptures, and that there is a God,—who has Moses and the Prophets, namely, the Word of Truth thus asserted! For, were this the method, miracles would no more be mira-

cles, than the diurnal revolution of the sun, the growth and specification of plants and animals, the attraction of the magnet, and the like, which we daily pass over, without the least reflection.

Sufficient, therefore, it is, that miracles there were, to convince those who saw them, and establish the veracity of their Author, and the religion which they were shown to confirm, and by which our forefathers were induced to believe, and to worship the true God, as the faith is in Jesus.

If Faith, and Hope, and daily experience, be not sufficient demonstration, let us no more believe any of the ancient historians, orators, and poets, were the authors of those works which pass under their names. Let us no more send out ships to the Indies for traffic, for we never conversed with the men, nor saw those countries. But that which is the support and very life of the world, Commerce, and of enlarging the empire of mankind, and of civilizing barbarous nations, of planting the true religion, and whatever else may be the product of industry, must cease; and we be but a miserable society of men, inactive and good for nothing, without acquiescence in a moral persuasion, and that all our ancestors had not universally agreed to deceive their posterity. We cannot think it reasonable, that actions, and facts, and things that are past, should be summoned to be reacted for the satisfaction of every curious impertinent, and to render the power and goodness of the Great and Tremendous God cheap and despicable.

Whilst, then, even by human faith we doubt not of

many things we never saw, why should we question the faith of the Gospel?[1] The validity of every testimony is grounded on the authority of the testifier, and that authority founded on his ability and integrity; and divine faith must be an assent to something as credible upon the testimony of God; for, if we receive the witness of man, as in most concerns we do, the witness of God is greater.[2]

We have often shown how unreasonable it is to require such kind of proofs for things, of which the nature of those things is utterly incapable: and such are many most certain and indubitable truths. Nor are all capable of the same kind of evidence (though of others as true) as colour to be heard, as is a sound; nor sound be seen, but colour may. Thus, the abstracted nature of mathematical conclusions may be demonstrated to sense, by most undeniable proofs; but so may not things (though perhaps as evident), which are not of the same nature, but depend on other circumstances. Such are things out of our prospect and reach, as God, and spirits, and the souls of men. One may indeed undoubtedly believe some things, which may yet possibly be otherwise; as one may certainly believe he was

[1] Non dicant, (says St. Augustine) non credimus, quia non videmus; quoniam si hæc dicant, coguntur fateri incertos sibi esse parentes suos. — "Beware of saying, 'we do not believe because we do not see;' for by this rule you will be forced to own it doubtful whether those whom you call your parents are really so."

[2] I. John, v., 9.

born of such a mother, at such a time, &c.; though he can have no other evidence, than that so he was told by credible people. He, therefore, who will believe nothing, because it is possible something may be otherwise, is an intolerable and fantastic sceptic, and a fit object both of pity and derision, and such are justly to be given up to eternal perplexity. There were no place nor reward for the virtue and grace of faith of ingenuous and free obedience, if all that we are required to believe were mathematically cogent. All wise men generally incline to that which is most probable, though perhaps not absolutely certain. Reward and punishment belong to free agents, and to such as believe, not those who see only; but such are blessed who have not seen, and yet believe.[1] In a word, then, as to demonstration, there is nothing more evident than that in which the Universal Church, in all ages, places, and communions, unanimously and generally consented to; and we may be as well assured of it, as in all the lines and figures of Euclid.

Let us then humbly submit and believe. For what though the mysteries of our most holy faith be many of them higher than we, narrow souls, can comprehend, the most learned and profoundly searching must, after all, acknowledge their ignorance of innumerable things. We know not what eternity is, infinite space, the manner and necessity of the existence of matter, and the like. In the mean time, how many things do we acquiesce in, and exercise our faith upon, without

[1] John, xx., 29.

all this scrutiny and ado? Though we daily eat and drink, yet shall we never certainly comprehend how nutrition is performed, nor the causes of a thousand effects. It is the miracle of the Christian religion to make us happy by obliging us to renounce ourselves, and we are then the most knowing and perfect when we know nothing but God, and what He has revealed; which is Christ crucified. This was St. Paul's profession, joy, and exultation, and should be ours. Did we attain to this humility, all these difficulties of believing without ocular demonstration would vanish, and we should no more wonder that we do not comprehend the nature of God, or His manner of knowledge and acting, His eternity, immensity, and other (to us) incommunicable attributes, but rather be astonished that such despicable atoms as we are, worms and dust, should be so graciously considered, and honoured with the manifestation of the God incarnate; and what He has done to redeem lost man, and raise him to the glories of a future and blessed state with Himself, after we are crumbled into dust.

Thrice happy and blessed were it for the world, that the belief of a Deity and the faith of the Christian religion were as well practised, as known and proved; it having more need of deep and sober consideration to produce obedience and holy life, than farther evidence! The world has had the experience and universal suffrage of more than six thousand years for the one, and of almost seventeen hundred for the other, who have all confessed, by deplorable effects, that the present gratifi-

cation of our corrupt senses and animal part, even in their highest circumstances, is not the *summum* or absolute satisfaction even of any one sense, which sinners pretend to please, seeing they perish in the enjoyment, and leave remorse and a sting behind. Men will not so believe, as to live and reform. They experimentally find that all vice whatsoever (the product of infidelity) leads in the end most certainly to destruction; but yet every one will make trial himself, and go through the same foolish vain course. None will believe his father, none, his grandfather, nor the confession of millions who are gone before them, and have all acknowledged and deplored it, when too late. Every one will be making the same essay, and seek for satisfaction in sense, as the foolish chymist does to find the philosopher's elixir, till they have consumed all, and undone themselves in the search. They labour in the fire, and weary themselves in pursuit of vanity, as if none had ever yet been deceived. Had the itch and impatience of trial (for want of faith) been the mistake of the first age only,[1] it were the more to be deplored and pitied; but that a race of men should persist in this infidelity, is both sad and ridiculous. But so is a great part of the world miserably infatuated; and whilst they believe not the true and real substance, are deluded by the shadow. They walk, as holy David tells us, in a vain umbrage, disquieting themselves to no purpose. Their days are fugitive, and fly away like a dream, when one awaketh. Their strength is only labour and sorrow;

[1] Mr. Howe, on the Blessedness of Righteousness.

whether they rise up early, and late take rest; they seek for it in trouble, and even life in death. As an ox to the slaughter, or a fool to the correction of the stocks, they go blindly and obstinately on, till a dart strike through their liver; they descend silently to the chambers of death, not so much as vouchsafing a thought of whither they are going for eternity. They dream of nothing save earthly paradises, till they find themselves in flames inextinguishable, and the dreadful gulf. These things has the Almighty, together with the blessed means of avoiding these miseries and being eternally happy, declared and revealed in the Christian religion, by His Word, the Prophets and Apostles, and by the concomitant testimony of all the wise and excellent persons that ever lived. But who hath believed their report? Nothing will satisfy, but sensible touch and demonstration.

7. CONCLUSION.

Thus have we seen the weakness and unreasonableness of all the considerable pretenders to advance their religion above the Christian; the philosopher deifying virtue, to set and exalt his wise man above Jupiter, and dispute felicity with the gods; the Pagan, fond of his abominable rites; the Jewish abrogated and at an end; and the very best of them defective, unsatisfactory, and short of the Christian, which alone has refined, reformed, and reduced the abased world to the true and genuine object of our faith. It has shown the madness of some, the folly of others, and weakness of all besides the Christian, and convinced the politic Atheist and

doubting sceptic, that the faith we profess, and the Scriptures which reveal it, can be no other than the truth of God.

Some of the more enlightened Heathen, it is true, were for a more exalted worship, even of their Gods—*Ut eos purâ, integrâ, incorruptâ mente veneremur*, which showed the universal necessity of it, and that they had never attained it. But, when it pleased God to reveal His Son, and shine upon the world with the evangelical light, it immediately dissipated this mist of ignorance, abolished both the Jewish rites and Pagan superstition, turning their carnal sacrifices and impure services into spiritual, and instead of blindness and error in manners and worship, substituted the principles of that truth which God had seated in the conscience, to the production of the graces of love, charity, humility, wisdom, and the rest of those evangelical virtues; which do all of them receive their sense and vigour from the power and efficacy of Christ's religion.

The Jews, indeed, had excellent lessons and exhortations expressive of their duty; but for the rest, (except what was moral and eternally obligatory to all mankind) all of it was temporal, local, and transitory, external, and beggarly, as the Apostle styles them, in respect of the doctrine of the Gospel and the precepts of the Messiah. He gives both grace and strength to perform what He commands, and affords the clearest notions of God; ascribing to Himself all conceivable perfection in the most exalted degree; enjoining nothing repugnant to reason, though sometimes proposing

to our faith mysteries above it, and exceeding human comprehension, worthy of the Great God, and which show they could come from no other but God.

The false religions have no rules to guide their votaries by, but the lying oracles of crafty priests, foolish augurs, uncertain traditions, and ridiculous legends, imposed on ignorant people; so that among some of them there was no wickedness and abomination which was not practised in their mysteries, even to offering human sacrifices unto devils; besides other unnatural pollutions, incantations, and barbarous ceremonies and customs which had no relation to virtue or the good of mankind. Whilst the Christian religion receives nothing but from the fountain of all purity, wisdom, and reason, namely, from the oracles of the Living God, so perfectly consummate in all that can render His creatures capable of attaining the Supreme Good, as nothing can be added to or diminished from them, to make them more complete. They answer all the nobler concerns of man, and satisfy his reason as well as his truly natural inclinations, unless vitiated, which it reforms and rectifies. To this is due the prudent government and order which keeps things from dissolution, re-establishing society, and all relations by an union of charity and divine love, in a degree far exceeding all the precepts and dictates of all other the most celebrated institutions, which but loose the reins of passion, ambition, cruelty, lust, vain-glory, and other vices: whilst the Christian, subduing these exorbitances, obsequious to government and good order, and guiding all

his actions with moderation, is still the same in all times and places, solicitous for nothing but that he may be continually improving himself and others. Thus, he surmounts the temptations of the world, and triumphs over all that may hinder his progress to heavenly perfection, even to the despising of death and torments, as supernaturally animated. And all this, without arms of secular violence, the eloquence of words, and other arts and stratagems, than the dart of truth and the invincible virtue of his profession.

The Christian, indeed, considered in his outward man, is a finite creature; but, as to his better condition and interior, as much above the rest of mankind, (however great and illustrious they shine in external circumstances and royal titles) as the faith he professes is transcendant above all others in the world. He places his thoughts and aims beyond the infinite space, and, whilst he has nothing, possesses all, as heir to Him who created all. Crowns and sceptres are in His esteem trifles of no value, who descends from His throne, to converse with the poorest beggar; and, being so in spirit, is exalted even to the height of preferment, looking at what the world admires, as gilded dreams. And however elevated in outward circumstances, to which the veneration of men is due, he is still himself no greater than he ever was, but for the opportunities he has of doing more good, and God more service. He that would diminish these from a great, good man, cannot make him either the less great or good.

Thus, the Christian mounts above all he sees, to

humble himself to the God he never saw, yet believes and loves. Thus born, and taught, and living in time, he learns and lives to eternity, when time shall be no more.

Never, never had it been known, that the way to happiness had been the Cross; that humility and poverty of spirit would lead to these heights; that to love and embrace our enemies and those who hate us, were to cultivate a moral virtue and real magnanimity; that to rejoice in affliction, was a serious advice and way to true content: that our thoughts were to be as pure and nice as our actions. Never did doctrines like these enter into the imagination of the most famous legislators renowned for their precepts and establishments; never did philosopher, statesman, or politician, found his sect or commonwealth on rules so contradictory to theirs, and the paradigms of the morosest stoic. But these are the maxims of the humble fishermen, and the doctrine taught them by the Author of Immortality, and the religion which we worthily advance and prefer.

Would you see more clearly how to attain the bliss it leads to? Pull out your eyes. Would you take hold of eternal life? Cut off the hand. Would you be happy? Renounce yourself. To be rich, covet nothing; to defend yourself from insults, render good for evil. To live in peace, bless your persecutors. Rare precepts, one would think, to recommend for the choice of one's religion! Indeed, her votaries are not many, and her dictates more rarely practised among the sages of the world and the authors of other religions.

But all these are the real and necessary lessons of the Christian school, and the weapons by which it has overcome the world; the graces of humility, simplicity, poverty of spirit, abjectness in our own esteem; the becoming lambs, doves, little children in malice, servants of others, has placed the Christian throne above all principalities and powers of the earth, yea, above the highest angels in heaven; for it has exalted our nature to the Throne of God.

And all this, yet without debasing its votaries, or rendering them less noble, but arguing their greatest courage, fortitude, prudence, and wisdom that the creature can attain to; and he accounts it the highest honour, because his Saviour has dignified it by His example, and vindicated the reasonableness of it by its glorious effects. Whilst He commands us to be innocent as doves, He bids us not be stupid, but wise as serpents; not negligent, but circumspect in our actions; not lazy and slothful, but diligent and sedulous in our callings; not to faint and give over, but to be invincible in our sufferings; not base and sordid, but honourable in our dealings, and to provide things decent. Thus sanctifying all our thoughts, actions, and conversations, and twisting them with our duty. What security and assurance, what an antepast of the life of heaven, does the Christian enjoy, who, thus living and conversing, thus loving and relying on God, is filled with the expectation and assurance of an eternal reward! He fears no loss who considers that, though all things here fleet and pass away, yet his God is a Rock of Ages,

still the same both in Himself and to Him. In solitude God is near, to be with him; in company, to entertain him; in health, to preserve him; in sickness, to be his Physician; in adversity, to comfort and relieve him; and even in death, to give him life, that shall never end; and, in the mean time, he beholds and entertains the troubles and afflictions he endures as but chastisements of a father for his benefit, marks of filiation, and proofs of his patience and perseverance.

Thus, as the Christian religion is beneficial to every individual, it is no less so to the public and community. His charity is as diffusive as the sunbeams. What philosophy, what polity, what religious institution, among all the catalogues of professors, can challenge equal privileges, or answer this character, or has obtained, prevailed, and lived so long in reputation, done such things amidst such contradictions, and made so many disciples, that would die for its Author? Apollonius Thyanæus was, after all his juggling and pretences, but a vain-glorious pedant; Simon Magus brake his neck in showing tricks; Mahomet was an epileptic lying impostor, whose rise and crimes are notorious; the Jewish religion, scant and short of perfection; the nation infinitely miserable and under a curse; and all other sects and heresiarchs dwindled to nothing. So that there is no need of any further argument to advance the pre-eminence of the Christian religion, so universally obtaining and embraced. So that, reflecting on the several infirmities and events of all professions but the Christian, we may, with holy David, with con-

fidence pronounce it of the Christian faith, "I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad."[1]

We have spoken of the agreeableness of the precepts of the Christian religion with the common and universal notions of human nature, which ought to be a demonstration of its excellency. For does any other religion pretend miracles? Be assured, if its doctrine do not withal declare its worth, it is all but imposture and to be rejected; yea, though an angel from heaven should descend to proclaim it. If the person also of him who is patron of it be not more than man, no Numa, no Minos, no Mahomet is to be hearkened to. If the rewards are not pure and spiritual, as well as the doctrine, it is to be refused. The Christian religion is transcendant in all this; the dignity of the Author, God — not man alone; the doctrine of a tenour that no other religion ever proposed, or could hope to propagate upon such admirable and unthought-of methods. Such is the sacrifice of broken hearts, depending on Providence, charity to enemies, forgiving injuries, self-abnegation, martyrdom, and suffering for the truth, and a thousand contradictions to flesh and blood.

Our Saviour tells His disciples what they were to expect in this life—the hatred of all men, nay, of their very parents and nearest relations for the sake of their Lord and Master; the meanness of whose birth they set down, nor sparing their own infirmities. Then, for miracles, beyond any we ever heard of performed by

[1] Ps. cxix., 96.

others. Never were any that approached them. The wind and seas obey Him; yea, death itself is vanquished. Men, hell, devils acknowledge His power; and the wonders which He does are in all the parts of nature; and this before thousands, not in corners, but in the famous Temple, the most populous cities, in the house, the wide field, at land and sea, and every where manifesting His Divine power.

Then, for Prophecy. He foretells the progress of this doctrine, the destruction of Jerusalem, the renown of Mary Magdalen's pious profession, His own death and resurrection. We find His miraculous conception and the circumstances of His birth foretold by angels, confirmed and honoured by the wise men. To this add His glorious transfiguration. The fulfilling of every tittle predicted of Him by the Prophets, and that so particularly by David, and Isaiah, and Daniel, as if they had been present at their completion, even to the vinegar and the gall, and the dividing of His garments at His crucifixion.

When we shall then seriously consider the severe contradiction through which the holy Jesus went, to propagate and establish what He came to propose to the world, in a period when it was so corrupted with vice, is it possible to conceive that these had been arguments to attract His followers, had they not been true; had not His doctrine been from heaven, though Himself might not possibly have carried the reputation of these things during His own life, which was not long upon the earth, and as He was not conversing with the

world above two or three years? That His disciples, and those whom they converted, should retain the same power, and proceed so mightily in word and deed, is plainly astonishing. Consider the effect of St. Peter's first sermon; five thousand made Christians at one time! that admirable and sublime discourse concerning the Resurrection; that a chained prisoner should make his Judge to tremble on the tribunal;[1] the boldness of the persecuted Apostles, the zeal of Stephen, and other confessors and martyrs! Seducers do not use to flatter in such terms. And where had these ignorant fishermen these sublime speculations—this doctrine of regeneration, such as was our Blessed Saviour's with the woman of Samaria, in which there was nothing of human, nothing but Divine? For so even the censorious Scribes and proud Pharisees were astonished at His doctrine.[2] For He taught them as one having authority, and never man spake like Him, though they came, with all the prejudices imaginable, to contradict what He said, yet found they no cause they could take hold of.

The power of the truth, even by these weak and despicable means and instruments, in the sight of the world, did greater things than all the Alexanders, Cæsars, and heroes by fire and sword, than all the orators by their admired harangues, than all the politicians by all their worldly wisdom.

Lastly, consider we this religion as to its end and design, which is only to make men better, and reform their lives by principle and example; the whole lan-

[1] Acts, xxiv., 25. [2] Matt., vii., 28, 29.

guage and predication of the Gospel being but to amend men's lives. And how is it possible that impostors (without any appearance of self ends) should make it their sole employment, with the utmost hazard of their lives, (than which nothing is more precious) to render men good and holy; and that there should continue so long a succession of men persevering through such exquisite torments, to propagate and promote virtue and sanctity of life. Doubtless, few other religions aim at any such ends, or could expect such success. Self-love, self-conceit, ambition, and the desire of enjoying earthly pleasure, may induce men to make use of expedients of force and fraud, to serve their carnal advantages; but never was it seen, since the world began, that holiness, charity, humility, and all those shining virtues which the Christian doctrine proposed, took that course to recommend and establish itself. No religion but the Christian inspected the heart, and bent all its forces to eradicate the innate corruptions which reign within. They only judged, by the outward appearance, that men were good or evil, without at all concerning the interior, which inclines them to all those disorders that render them obnoxious to the displeasure of God. And this is plain by what our Blessed Master perstringes so sharply in the precisest sect of the Pharisees, those painted sepulchres, who, above all the rest of the Jews' religionaries, thought themselves the most unblameable, and passed for the holiest professors.

To conclude: it is certain that what God has made was for His glory only, and the communication of His

boundless goodness. Nor can we conceive how He should receive the glory so justly due to Him, but from the chief and most intellectual of His creatures; by whom He does receive, as it were, the glory of all the rest of His inferior creatures made to serve Him. Nor does the Almighty think this enough, without the communication of His own beatitude, which is the consummation of all the happiness a creature is capable of, and infinitely more than it can comprehend, with supernatural grace. To attain this, God has given us His word, laws, commands, example, worthy His goodness and other attributes. And the observance of these is called *Religion;* and this religion, proceeding but from One, must needs also be but One; and that coming from God alone, and approving what is most perfect (He himself being so), that religion can be no other than the Christian, because that religion alone contains in it all the characters of perfection. It is so pure, as not to suffer the least spot or sulliage. It condemns evil thoughts, and so much as imaginations, before they come to action. It works out every fibre and appearance of evil; and has for its reward the highest recompence of eternal felicity. And that there are, for all this, so many who live contrary to its sacred maxims, is no dishonour to it, but rather enhances and declares its excellency; and by infinite blessings which it bestows upon the sincere embracer of it, the decided preference it challenges above all religions whatsoever. For, as we have shown, very obscure was the prospect of any thing, above the enjoyment of the present, to the Jews:

plentiful harvests and vintages, breeds of cattle, long life and posterity, victory over enemies, peace and safety at home, so that a famous sect among them looked no farther than this life's duration.

And for the Heathen, the wisest and most early of them, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans,—though they had, by their own reasoning, and from the consideration of the soul of man, and the unequal distribution and events of things in this world, and that all creatures, save mankind, had all their natures were capable of,—presumed that there was something behind and to come, which should even the soul fully satisfy. Yet of this they were in doubt, as we find by the writings of these great men, Socrates, Cicero, Seneca, &c.; and the felicity of the stoics, and the *summum bonum* of the rest, consisting either in sensual enjoyments, proper for this uncertain life only, and such as brutes enjoy.

Whereas, the Christian, sincerely living a Christian, looks as far beyond all this as Heaven is from Earth, and to a place as different as light is from darkness, as eternity from one moment; formed of the most exalted perfection of all the soul and body can fancy desirable, or can be capable of, as vigour, health, beauty, knowledge, self-satisfaction, immortality; and, to comprehend all in one, the vision, fruition, and contemplation of God Himself in Christ, in and with whom is all happiness consummate, beyond all that mortal man can desire or possibly conceive.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE DECADENCE AND CORRUPTION OF RELIGION; THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION ESPECIALLY.

SECTION I. OF THE GRADUAL CORRUPTION OF RELIGION, FROM THE CREATION TO THE GIVING OF THE LAW, AND THENCE TILL CHRIST.

SECTION II. OF THE DECADENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, FROM ITS INSTITUTION BY CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES, TO THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

SECTION III. HERESIES AND SECTS, FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT TIME.

SECTION IV. OF THE CORRUPTIONS OF THE ROMISH CHURCH.

SECTION I.

OF THE GRADUAL CORRUPTION OF RELIGION, FROM THE CREATION TO THE GIVING OF THE LAW, AND THENCE TO CHRIST.

From the infidelity of some believing nothing at all, as *Atheists*; or others, save what they see, as *Sceptics*; and such as believe amiss, as *Heathens*, *Heretics*, and *Schismatics*, is come so general and universal a decadence and corruption of the True and Evangelical, that is, of the Christian Religion, that, without the extraordinary

Providence and Goodness of God, directing to a serious and partial inquiry and research, it would be extremely difficult, and next almost to impossible, to find out the truth. This, therefore, we shall in this chapter endeavour to bring to light; that, seeing and knowing who they are, and what they pretend, we may both take and give warning, and avoid the danger of being seduced, and escape the peril, as from so many rocks and shelves in such an ocean of errors and impostures.

Being, then, by what has been at large produced, sufficiently assured of the truth, stability, and excellence of our Foundation,—and having dug even to the spring-head, from whence to derive the Faith and Religion we profess and prefer, namely, the Holy Scriptures,—and having next endeavoured to make appear that there never was any saving religion upon which mankind might confidently rely for salvation, besides the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Mosaical of old, revealed in the Old Testament, before our Saviour's Incarnation, and the Christian, instituted by our Saviour, typified by the Old, revealed in the New Testament, planted by the Apostles, and, by their followers, propagated to us.... After a brief and summary recapitulation of all other Pretenders (as having no footsteps of Eternal Truth deducible from the same Divine authority), we shall pass to those Heresiarchs and Doctrines heterodox to the Christian (even among Christians) in its original, primitive, and genuine purity. For, though, as we affirmed, we are sufficiently assured that the Christian Religion is the one true and saving Faith; yet, among

so many bold Pretenders, who go under that denomination, to decide which amongst them is most conformable to that which Christ and His Apostles left and recommended to the world, would prove no small difficulty, without being, in some measure, enabled to compare its doctrine with the rest; and to apply both to the rule of holy Scripture, the only true and infallible touchstone by which to discern what, amongst all these professions, is the safest to rely on.

And, in this recension, we shall (for the better discovery how these many errors crept in) methodize them historically, according to the time of their first springing-up after the tares had been sown by the envious man; whilst men, that is, the guides and governors of the Church, to whom the culture of the vineyard was committed, slept, or were less vigilant.

We have shown how our first parents had their religion from God, in Paradise; an easy observance of a most reasonable injunction, in token of that gratitude and homage they owed to their bountiful and great Creator, for all the enjoyments of health, plenty, and whatsoever desirable felicity the human creature was capable of,—and all this, with an eviternal fruition here in that delicious place, or translation to a yet more glorious. The conditions were, but the abstaining from the fruit of one peculiar tree, tempting to the eye, indeed, but exitial to the taste. The rest consisted in adoration and praises of their Benefactor, the contemplation of His glorious and stupendous works, the culture of the garden (of all diversions the most agreeable

and natural), with the free use and benefit of another Sacramental Tree, that should re-invigorate him upon all occasions.

This was the happy state of mankind, till, hearkening to the seduction of a newly apostate spirit, envious of their felicity, they were prevailed with to violate this test of their obedience, upon the false suggestion of becoming wiser and more happy than the God who made them. This was the first decadence and true original of all the subsequent lapses and corruptions happening in the world. For the nature of man, tainted through this defection in the root and fountain, derived its contagion to the branches; the parents had eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth were set on edge. For, though their posterity had yet the light of nature to direct them, the propensity to evil, upon this weakening fall, was so strong that, though that which might have been known of God was manifest (for God had shown it to them)[1]—the invisible things from the creation of the world being easily seen and understood by the things which are made, even His eternal power and Godhead,—they became without excuse.

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God; neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, changing the glory of the Incorruptible and Invisible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and reptiles. Wherefore, God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lust of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between them-

[1] Rom., i., 19, 20.

selves; who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is God, blessed for ever. Amen!

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy and debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful; who, knowing the judgment of God (that they who commit such things are worthy of death), not only did the same, but had pleasure in those who did them.

Behold the fruits of the forbidden tree, diffusing an universal corruption, and even extinguishing that natural light which yet was left in the conscience of every man, namely, the necessity of a reasonable, and at least a moral, conversation, though there had been no reward of virtue, or punishment of vice! For the Divine misericord did not utterly abandon our lapsed parents in this condition; but, in pity to their frailty, He was pleased to receive them into grace again, upon a second and better covenant; in the promised seed of whom the Messiah should spring, and in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed; that is, so many as would take hold of this freely offered grace, and, being possessed of it, implore His aid, since without it they were still in danger of falling away again. This, though darkly at the first, was yet communicated to that race of Adam, the most devoted to the worship of their Maker, and from whose loins the promised Messiah was to come. Nor needed they other means to consign the

truth pure and uncorrupt, than the early example of the righteous Abel.

All the world, even the most barbarous of nations, seem to have notions, that crimes were to be purged with bloody sacrifices. This, though true, yet being perverted to the culture of stocks and stones, and accompanied with abominable rites—God justly gave them up to those delusions.

Adam, Seth, Enos, Enoch, Methusalem, Noah, Shem, Abraham, and his posterity, retained the worship of the True God, before the Word was consigned to writing; God likewise, from time to time, appearing to and conversing with them, to declare His immediate pleasure and confirm their faith. And thus they, in like manner, (it is likely) received the Seven Precepts ascribed to Noah, so long observed by the Gentile proselytes.

As to the external form and ministerial part, the first-born of the family, as chief and prince, was also priest; till, families and tribes increasing, and the impatience of paternal animadversion, and from necessity, combining into political societies, they found it expedient to elect them rulers, who, in process of time, became, instead of indulgent fathers, tyrants haughty and full of violence, oppression, rapine, lust, and idolatry, which overspread the face of all the habitable earth.[1]

But now the righteous stock, in danger of being wholly perverted, the same God, of His infinite mercy, mindful of His promises, thought fit to separate a select

[1] Now it was that Nimrod, or Belus, flourished. Some will have him to be the Baal and Jupiter of the Heathens.

people, from whom should come He that should open their blinded eyes, and reduce them from those errors, first, under the Covenant of Circumcision, and to purge and distinguish them from the impious nations, by governing them Himself, under laws and ordinances peculiar to them.

The first and chief of these was the patriarch Abraham, the Father of the Faithful, honoured with that distinguishing title for his signal obedience, in quitting his country and idolatrous relations, depending on God's Providence and faith in His promises, freely offering His Son—a type of Him in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

In this family flourished the Church and true religion, till the bondage in Egypt, which patiently enduring for exercise and trial of their faith, they were delivered from it by mighty wonders, under the conduct and government of Moses, and a more settled form and law of ordinances; shadowing under figures a yet more transcendant dispensation, in due time to be revealed. It was now (as we noted) that God, considering the brevity of men's lives and frequent interruptions, caused their oral traditions to be committed to writing, the history of the Creation to be penned by the same Moses, and the moral, ritual, and ceremonial law to be written.[1]

[1] Not that the moral law was not before graven in their hearts, but now first solemnly promulgated and engraven on tables of stone; being no other than the law of nature itself, and might, haply, have been written too before, if what Josephus relates of

As to the Writings of Holy Scripture, whether the Book of Job was more ancient than the Pentateuch (which some think the Work of Moses also) imports no further than to show, that the Gentiles were not altogether ignorant of their duty, however falling and defecting from it; and it gives us an instance of the patience, wisdom, piety, and virtue of one, at least, amongst them, for our example.

But the monstrous corruption and decadence of God's own people, the Jewish Church, is recorded and transmitted to us not only by the Mosaic Writings, but by those of all the Prophets; namely, the monstrous ingratitudes, idolatries, and abominations; their several murmurings, calf-worship in the Wilderness; that of all the tribes under the several judges, and when there was no king in Israel, every one did what was right in his own eyes; when they had kings, by even Solomon himself, Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin, Ahab, Manasseh, and other wicked kings.[1] We have already treated of the history of the Creation, the economy and progress of the Church, and its various dispensations under patriarchs, judges, kings, and the flourishing condition it continued in, till their sins and defection from the commands and law of God moved Him to give them up to several severe captivities, when Esdras

the inscriptions on the pillars at Joppa (the ruins of which he tells us were still to be seen) were insculped by Seth.

[1] This being so plainly historized in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and given an account of in the eight and ninth chapters of this treatise, I shall not need recite at length.

and other prophets and priests instructed them, as they were able, during these dispersions. After this discipline and humiliation, return and restoration, they were again ruled by priests, till Antiochus and the Grecian monarchs and usurpers rendered that title and office venal. This again exposed the true religion to divers innovations and corruptions, especially under Herod and the Roman Presidents, when both priests, scribes, and doctors of the law, exercised ecclesiastical jurisdiction. These, together with the proud and singular Pharisees, increased this corruption by their foolish glosses, additions, and traditions, which broke them into such prodigious sects and heresies, that, impatient of contradiction, and hardened against the truth, they proceeded to that height of wickedness and malice, as to crucify the Lord of Life, the true and (even by them) earnestly expected Messiah, who at this very time came to reform and save the world. Thus, He, who came to abrogate a harder law than any their forefathers could support, and to substitute a more refined and better, take off a heavy yoke they had now lain under two thousand years, to reform their lives and save their souls, was rejected and set at nought. They blasphemed His doctrines, His miracles, and all the gracious methods He used, against the most evident conviction; so that, provoking God to the utmost, He gave them up to that final deplorable destruction, and maledictions invoked upon them and their children, under which they remain an accursed people, and example of God's displeasure to this day.

SECTION II.

OF THE DECADENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, FROM ITS INSTITUTION BY CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES, TO THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

The sad defection and catastrophe of the Jewish Church made way for the Christian religion, taught by the late martyred Saviour and Messiah; and who was no other than what their Scripture and prophets foretold was to succeed, and to be the consummation of what their law shadowed under types and figures; unfolding the mysteries till now veiled and wrapped up in that of ordinances, and pointing out to us the way to eternal life, breaking down the partition-wall which separated the Gentiles from the Holy of Holies, and reducing into one both Jew and Gentile, under one, namely, the Lord Jesus, the Saviour of the world.[1]

But long it was not ere the old serpent and enemy of mankind, more envenomed than ever, as feeling the press of that heel which was come to break his head, bent all his forces, not only to oppose, but corrupt the heavenly doctrine, and to proseminate his curious cockles, dissensions and factions, and heterodox and (some of them) blasphemous opinions in this goodly plantation, preached by our Blessed Saviour, planted and propagated by His Apostles, and now universally prevailing with incredible and miraculous progress. For,

[1] How the Primitive Christians lived under this dispensation, see in Acts, iv., 32, &c.; and with what love, charity, union, agreement, zeal, and community of goods.

in process of time, the Church, according to our Blessed Saviour's promise and prediction, emerging out of many persecutions, and being so stupendously victorious, that kings and queens became its nursing fathers and mothers, growing rich and opulent, the lusts and ambition of men, perverting guides and governors, covetousness, sloth, ignorance did so overspread,—impostors and crafty persons so pollute it with false doctrines,—that within less than sixty years after our Saviour's Ascension, no fewer than seven famous churches, planted by the Apostles in Asia, were tainted with divers errors, mentioned and perstringed by St. John in the Apocalypse: so early did the mystery of iniquity begin to work.

I. HERESIES AND SECTS OF THE FIRST CENTURY.

Nicolaitans, from one Nicolaus, (about the reign of Domitian) one of the seven deacons mentioned by St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles.[1]

It was an illiterate sect who would have wives in common, and who were a sort of Adamites, a species of Gnostics in many particulars. They held the world to spring from light and darkness in conjunction; that the angels created this inferior globe. They also used very barbarous mysteries and impurities.

Simon Magus, or the famous Magician, who the Scriptures tell us would have purchased the gifts of the Holy Ghost, healing, and tongues with money.[2] This not succeeding, he denies the sacred Trinity, gives himself out to be God, or some great and mighty power;

[1] Acts, vi., 5. [2] Acts, viii., 18.

held that angels and intelligences created the world; denied also the Resurrection, and that God was unknown to the patriarchs, and is said, after all his cheats, to have broken his neck, pretending to fly in the air, and so up to heaven, before the people at Rome; and that, when St. Peter was there, by whose prayers he was precipitated.[1] He was certainly the original of many impostors, both before (as some think) Nicholas, and after him; as *Menander*, a scholar of his, who styled himself a saviour of mankind, and baptized in his own name. *Ebion*, who denied the Deity of Christ, held it unlawful to eat flesh; of all the Gospels, admitted St. Matthew only; retained Circumcision. His sectators were the San, who pretended divers other gospels, as that of Eve, which they called Evangelium Perfectionis.

The *Nazarenes*, an enthusiastical sect, who pretended to certain dreams of Noah's wife, and that she set the Ark five times on fire whilst it was building, and that it was as often repaired.

Cerinthus, a Jew, (about the time of St. John's exile) taught that Christians ought to be circumcised, denied the eternity of a future life; but that, instead thereof, there should be a thousand years of sensual pleasure for the saints. This impure wretch, coming into a bath where the Evangelist St. John was washing, the holy man immediately went out of it. He had to his disciple a false prophet, called *Eluxia*.

[1] See Euseb. Eccles. Hist., l. ii., c. 13. I know the latter part of this story is questioned by the learned Valesius.

OF THE SECOND CENTURY.

A.D. 135, appeared *Saturninus* and *Basilides*, followers of Menander.

A.D. 140, *Carpocrates*, (beginning in Egypt) believing themselves the only saints; they held two principles of good and evil, &c., held faith sufficient without repentance and a good life; held two opposite wills in God; and that it was as expedient to appease the evil god by any villany whatsoever, as the good Deity by an honest and virtuous life; that Christ was only man sprung from Joseph and Mary by ordinary generation; that the soul only ascended.

Gnostics, who, indeed, appeared twenty years before; a sensual, impure sort of heretics, affecting the haughty title of persons more knowing than the rest of the world, which they said was created by certain powers called *Æons*. They said the faithful had two souls—a celestial, inciting to good; and a terrestrial, prompting to evil; and that they transmigrated into brutes. That there were two gods, or principles—one good, the other wicked; and would have two persons to be in our Saviour, distinct; of which one was *Christ*, the other *Jesus*. They declared against martyrdom and suffering for religion; which they held it lawful to change or deny in time of persecution, and on like occasions. In a word, the Church had never a more vile and profane sect risen in it. They held that men were also under an irresistible Fate, which encouraged them to all sorts of villany. And, therefore, made God

the author of sin; and that virtue and vice were so made by arbitrary laws, founded in the Divine Will, but being really, in themselves, imaginary things only, and not real.

(Anno 144.) *Valentinians* were a spawn of *Gnostics*, holding no fewer than thirty *æons*, ages or worlds, begotten by Abyss and Silence, or two Intelligences, from whom issued the Word of Life. That the body of Christ was only spiritual, making also God the author of sin; that the soul alone was redeemed, the body perishing; ascribing salvation to good works only; with the Epicureans, that the earth spontaneously produced mankind, of whom He made three sorts, *Cainites*, *Abelites*, and *Sethists*; the posterity of Cain being the damned; that Judas, being of Cain, (out of envy to the offspring of the two former) betrayed his Master; that angels had carnal commerce with women; with a world of such stuff and allegorical nonsense, as Irenæus[1] shows at large. And from hence the blasphemous

(Anno 142.) *Ophites*, who, adoring serpents, said that Christ was the tempter of Eve in that shape, and in the same entered the Virgin's womb; denying both the Incarnation and Resurrection.

(Anno 154.) *Cerdon*, from Carpocrates, maintained two principles, rejected all the Old Testament, denied Christ's humanity and His Resurrection, and that He suffered in spectre only. His scholar was

Marcion, who taught that the evil principle of God created the world; that our Blessed Saviour, descend-

[1] Irenæus, advers. Hæret., l. 1, c. 1, &c.

ing into hell, delivered the Sodomites, Cains, and other wicked persons. He condemned marriage and eating flesh; re-baptized after notorious crimes; baptizing another, (as proxy) for a *Catechumen* dying, before well instructed. He held war utterly unlawful upon every occasion; that men's souls did transmigrate.

(Anno 172.) *Apelles*, who attributed a starry substance to Christ's body, for that his human shape was fantastical only. Against these writ Theophilus of Antioch.

(Anno 170.) *Tatianus*, or the *Encraticæ*, disciples of Apelles, from their celibacy and abstinence from marriage, flesh, wine, and other incentives; and held that the first vine was produced between the Earth and the Devil and the poison of serpents; and, therefore, used wine in the Eucharist only; esteemed all men reprobate, besides their own party, even Adam himself; and denied that male and female were created by God. Their usual saying was, *Non est curandum quid quisque credat, sed tantùm curandum quid quisque faciat;* and that, so they lived well, they might be of any religion.

(Anno 170.) *Montanitæ* (with Prisca and Maximilla.) They used to baptize the dead, and to thrust their fore-finger into their nostrils when they prayed, to express their detestation of sin; great boasters of the spirit; nay, that their master was himself a divine spirit; they were all for revelations, denying Scripture. They had their strumpets following them, and other wenches, whom they called Prophetesses. They condemned second marriages; but allowed incest; mingled

infants' blood with flour in the Sacrament, and confounded the person of the Son, saying that the Father only suffered; and this monstrous heresy lasted to the fifth century nearly.

Quintiliani, about the same time, from one of that name, held that Christ assumed the form of a woman, not of man. They worshipped *Eve*, as being the cause of man's happiness, by eating the forbidden fruit; and, therefore, admitted the sex to the Priestly office: hence the *Artotyritæ*, who mingled cheese with the Sacramental bread, as being the milk of sheep, which was Abel's acceptable offering. Against all these writ Apollinaris, (a Cretan bishop) Serapion, and divers other holy persons, especially Irenæus, bishop of Lyons.

Blastus and *Florinus*, from those above, held that God created evil; from him (Anno 185) *Hermogenes*, a painter, maintained that matter was *ab æterno*.

The *Quartodecimani* observed Easter, on the *fourteenth* day of the moon in March (as the Jews), pretending tradition from St. John; for which Pope Victor excommunicated them. And this opinion prevailed two hundred years, to the great disturbance of the charities; it being a most unnecessary dispute, and condemned for such by the first General Council of Nice; which ordained it to be kept after the custom of the Western Church, as received by them from St. Peter. This sect also denied repentance to the lapsed.

Theodotus and *Artemon* denied the Divinity of Christ, with the *Gnostics*; that one might renounce the faith in time of persecution; held our Saviour but mere

man. The ringleader of this sect was a tanner, and was followed by

Bardesanes, who affirmed that God Almighty himself was obnoxious to Fate; holding a stoical necessity, and that virtue and vice depended on the influence of the planets. The

Valesians, misinterpreting the text,[1] held that none save eunuchs could enter heaven.

Patripassians and Praxeas affirmed (with the *Montanists*) that the Father only suffered, as being united with the Son; for they acknowledged but one person only in the Holy Trinity, as was also the error of Sabellius in the next century.

OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

(Anno 200.) *Adamites,* an early heresy, springing from the impious *Gnostics.* They went naked; their conversation with women was promiscuous in their assemblies, which they called *Paradise,* and held was only to be earthly. They rejected marriage and prayer, for that God already knew all our wants; and, therefore, it was superfluous. A race of these were the *Famulists,* of later date, who held that Christ is holiness, and Antichrist, sin; deny the Resurrection and baptism, till the age of thirty years; that heaven is to be only on this earth; that angels are born of women; every day a Sabbath; that the world was long before Adam; that, being certainly elected, they were not to pray for pardon of sin.

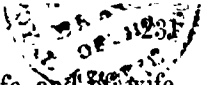
[1] Matt., xix., 12.

Novatus, an African (a discontented person), and Novatianus, at Rome, or the *Cathari*, were a sort of Puritans. He denied repentance to the lapsed, after baptism; and, therefore, re-baptized such as embraced his sect; condemning second marriages, and observing divers Mosaic rites, with many other opinions of the *Apostolici* and *Encratites*, concerning wives and goods. Yet some will not have them so much blamed, and think St. Cyprian too zealous against them, as holding all the fundamentals. They were only too rigid in the point of discipline. Indeed, there were great heats in the Church about this controversy.

Basilides and *Martialis*, in Spain, against whom writ Agrippa Castor, in twenty-four books, most learnedly; and, about the same time, the *Angelici*, *Eunuchiani*, *Beryllus*, &c.

Chiliasts, or *Millenians*, (from Papias, the century before), held that our Blessed Lord should reign on earth a *thousand* years after the Resurrection; but enjoying only spiritual delights. Irenæus, and many of the Fathers, besides Papias, were of this opinion, and it was almost universal, for two hundred and fifty years, till Dionysius Alexandrinus opposed it. Nor has the Church as yet condemned it for heresy; but those other enormities nourished under it by the truculent Anabaptists and Fifth-monarchy men.

The Scriptures, from whence they raked this opinion, were the literal interpretation of Isaiah, lxv., 17-25; also of St. Matthew, xix., 29; xxvi., 29, &c. Luke, xxi., 30, where our Lord speaks of His disciples having



restoration of a hundred-fold in this life, and of wife, children, relations, houses, lands, &c.; and of eating and drinking with Him. But it is not said "In my kingdom," but "in my father's kingdom;"[1] which plainly coufutes it. Lactantius describes their tenets amply in his seventh book, as being himself led away with the conceit, looking for a carnal coming of Christ, as the Jews did. Nor was St. Augustine himself altogether clear of this at first; but afterwards confesses his mistake; and, indeed, St. Jerome fully refutes it. Doubtless, the meaning of these expressions of Scripture are only to set forth the felicity of the other world by things sensible in this. However, that the Church shall enjoy a thousand years' tranquillity in power, purity, and external glory before the last Judgment, many of the reformed and very learned divines have thought, as Alsted, Du Moulin, Piscator, &c., from several expressions and hints in the Apocalypse.

(Anno 260.) *Sabellius* confounds the persons of the Holy Trinity.

Paulus Samosatenus. His sect lasted long in the East; affirming Christ to have been only man, and that God dwelt not in Him otherwise than by grace and efficacy; and, therefore, they baptized not in His name, and were rejected by the Nicene Council and the Synod at Antioch, who would re-baptize them. Then comes the Manichæan heresy (A. D. 276) from *Manes*, that arch-heretic, whom Bishop Archelaus would have killed, a Persian born—a heresy compounded of all

[1] Matt., xxvi., 29.

others. He held two principles, or superior powers; and that the Godhead had parts, or human organs, which hardly any the very heathen philosophers held. That God was substantively in every thing, even in the most sordid ordure. They condemned the use of flesh, of wine; that all fell out by chance; excluded the Old Testament, and said that the True God was not the author of the Law. They denied the Divinity of Christ and the Resurrection, and said His passion was fictitious. That the soul was the substance of God, and passed into a beast's; that John the Baptist was damned for doubting of Christ; that there was no Judgment; that himself was the true *paraclete*, or comforter; that mankind had two repugnant souls, and that the same was in all vegetables, and both were a part of God. They worshipped sun and moon; used execrable purifications; dreamed there were ships in the air, as Anaxagoras fancied, which transported souls, &c.;[1] condemned marriage; rejected baptism, almsgiving, good works; said that propensity and will to sin was natural, and not through the fall of Adam; that it was also a substance, not any quality traduced from parents, as did the Catharists, Macaroi, or the Blessed, (a sect so called) and it lasted in the Church three hundred years after this monstrous heretic was dead, that is, flayed alive for treason. His giving man's shape to God was likewise the error of the

Anthropomorphites, whose author was Audæus.

[1] He that would see more of this stuff may read the disputation of Archelaus, Bishop of Mesopotamia.

Origenists (from a disciple of the Egyptian Anthony), who renounced marriage; but allowed concubinage. But the *true Origenists* were so called from that incomparably learned Father, called also *Adamantian*, from his wonderful industry. These latter held, that the soul, after a certain revolution, should re-animate the body, and so from time to time; denied resurrection, or a future state; and held, that the very devils should, after a thousand years of torment, be released; that neither Christ nor the Holy Ghost see the Father; that the Son is not co-eternal with Him; affirmed pre-existence of souls, and that they were sent down to the earth, to expiate in men's bodies for some crimes committed in Heaven; turning the stories of Adam and Eve and all Scriptures into allegories;[1] and these opinions continued above three hundred years.

The *Hierarchitæ* denied marriage and the salvation of infants.

OF THE FOURTH CENTURY.

(Anno 306.) *Donatists.* Donatus was a Numidian, who separated from the orthodox, because Cæcilianus was made Bishop of Carthage by preference; pretending that such Cæcilianus, and the Bishops who ordained him, had burnt their Bibles (as *Traditores*), in time of persecution: which, upon examination, was found notoriously false. He refused to communicate with any, in whom he found the least spot of human infirmity;

[1] See these Stories contradicted by St. Augustine. De Civ. Dei, l. xi., c. 23.

for the Church (he said) was to be immaculate, and that *his* was the only pure one. He held that none were to be urged to reform their lives; and that the efficacy of Sacraments depended on the dignity of the Minister, and not on the Holy Ghost. They also re-baptized; denied magistracy, and that they might destroy any who were not of their sect. They pretended much to revelations and enthusiasm; affirmed the Son to be lower and less than the Father. And from these sprung the

Circumcellians, so called from their recesses, or cells, in which they lived very austerely, while yet they were thieves and murderers. From Donatus proceeded also the

Parmenianists, who said the world was created by an evil God, as did *Manes*, confounding the Persons of the Trinity; holding pre-existence of souls, and that they were of the substance of God himself; that the stars governed human events, and condemned marriage.

The *Luciferians*, also, about this time, from one Lucifer, Bishop of Sardinia, who taught that the devils created men's souls; that they were corporeal, and by traduction; denied repentance to the lapsed clergy.

Jovinian was a Roman; held a parity of sins; but that, after baptism, men could no more sin; rejected the perpetual virginity of Mary, as did, afterwards, the *Collyridians* and *Prisciltianists*, (an Arabian sect) who offered cakes to her.

(Anno 365.) The *Euchites* and *Messalians*, with the Enthusiasts, were in continual prayer, as the only re-

quisite, and therefore rejected all sacraments, faith, preaching, alms, &c.; and allowed dissembling in times of persecution; affirmed God to be visible, and had delivered to the Devil the government of mankind.

(Anno 324.) *Arius*, from an African of that name, was, in the Great Constantine's reign, a priest under Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria; held that Christ, being man only, was created, *ex nihilo*, as any other creature; but that His soul was celestial; and that the Holy Ghost was likewise a creature, proceeding from the Son. Their doxology was, therefore, *Gloria* to the Father by the Son in the Holy Ghost; instead of what the orthodox used, namely, the same we yet receive. In baptizing, they dipped the upper part of the body only, to the navel, counting the inferior parts unworthy. They also re-baptized; and very long did this pernicious heresy continue in the Church, nor is it yet quite extinguished; but much of it is retained among the Socinians to this day. But the greater contest was between the orthodox and the *Semi-Arians*, (A. D. 330), whether the Son of God were consubstantial with the Father; differing only in a single letter, the orthodox affirming Him Ὁμοουσιὸς, of the same individual essence with the Father; the Arians, that He was Ὁμοιουσιὸς, of like substance only, not of the same, though of like will; and so, that He was *not* God essentially, but in will and virtue.

Eunomians affirmed God comprehensible by the creature; denied the like equality of essence, power, and will between the Father and the Son; that the

Holy Ghost was also but a creature; re-baptized the orthodox, retaining most of the Arian opinions.[1]

(Anno 375.) *Apollinaris* affirmed that Christ assumed man's body and sensitive soul, not his rational, which, he said, was divinely supplied; that the Trinity was three *distinct* powers in God; that the flesh of Christ was consubstantiate with the Divinity, and that He transferred it from Heaven, not through the Blessed Virgin; that God had but one will; that the Ceremonial Law should, after the Resurrection, come into use again.[2]

(Anno 355.) *Heloidians* denied the virginity of the Blessed Mother of Christ.

(Anno 340.) The *Aërians* held parity of degrees between Bishop and Presbyter; reproved set fastings, yet condemned eating flesh; admitted none to Communion but the unmarried, and such as had renounced the world.

(Anno 377.) *Hermogenes*, or *Seleucinus*, affirmed the principles of the world to be eternal with God; that the soul was created by angels; that Christ, in His Ascension, left his body in the sun; rejected baptism and the Resurrection.

Patricians, holding that the Devil made human flesh; that it was, therefore, lawful to murder one's self, to be quit of that flesh.

[1] See arguments against Arian opinions, in Theodoret's Hist. Eccles., l. i., c. 4.

[2] See both of the tenets and wondrous spreading of this pernicious heresy in Sozomen, p. 675.

Tertullianists, from that famous and learned priest, (long before flourishing under Severus, the emperor) who, being excommunicated by the Roman clergy for following the opinions of Montanus, fell into the error of God's corporiety, though without delineation of parts; not so the souls of men, which he affirmed had, and that they decreased and increased with the body, and were by traduction; that the souls of the wicked became devils; affirmed that the Blessed Virgin Mary re-married after the death of Christ; boasted much of the *Paraclete,* to be poured on them in greater measure than upon the Apostles themselves; said it was utterly unlawful for Christians to take arms, and reputed a second marriage adultery.

OF THE FIFTH CENTURY.

(Anno 400-410.) The *Pelagians,* sprung from the corrupted philosophy of the Stoics and Peripatetics, and their pure naturals, from one Morgan, a British Presbyter (not a Scot, as Vossius mistakes,) under Theodosius; held that, if God's assistance were requisite, there could be no free-will; but that man had free-will, and was able to keep the Commandments without the special grace of God; that victory over sin proceeded not from the Divine assistance, but our own power; and therefore vain it was to pray for any one's conversion; that the faithful had no sin, nor children any original taint, and might, therefore, be saved without baptism, though they went to Limbo, a certain third receptacle; that death was not the wages of sin;

but that Adam should have died, had he not fallen, and that his fault passed no farther than himself; that concupiscence was no sin; that men obtained grace through their good works, and rejected predestination. Of these the more modest were

Semi-Pelagians, who denied original sin; that the well employing and using our natural powers and free-will was the cause of predestination; that God foresaw who would believe and persevere before the foundation of the world; but that to this grace was necessary the assistance of God; that infants were saved according to the good or evil life they would have embraced, had they lived to be adults; that therefore the number of the elect and reprobate was infinite; that one might reject grace and fall away.

Against the first Pelagians, writ St. Augustine and the African Bishops; and this heresy was condemned by several councils.

Against the Semi-Pelagians, the same Augustine, Prosper, Hilary, and, of later times, Calvin, Bishop Davenant, Dr. Twiss, &c. The Arminians and Remonstrants came, in many things, near these opinions, as we shall show in this Recension.

Predestinarians (yet St. Augustine's followers) affirmed, that those who were predestinate might sin securely, and could not be damned.

Nestorians, (so called from a Patriarch of Constantinople,) held Christ to be two distinct persons—one the Son of God, the other of Mary: [1] and that the first

[1] Mary, not *Deiparam,* but *Christiparam.*

descended not upon Him till he was baptized. He also made the Humanity equal to the Divinity, so confounding the Divine operations. These opinions were all condemned in the Council of Ephesus, by Cyril; and the heretic's tongue was eaten out by worms, and afterwards his body, with divers of his followers and disciples, swallowed up by an earthquake, like Corah and his company.[1]

Eutychians, confounding the nature of Christ, held that Christ had also two different natures before the union; but, afterwards, one only; the Divine, which only died, and the Human, swallowed up the other. This was condemned by a Provisional Synod at Constantinople, but revived again by Diascorus, Bishop of Alexandria, and condemned again by the Council of Chalcedon. In the fifth century were the

(Anno 500.) *Acephali*, who admitted of neither Bishop, Priest, nor Sacrament; confounded the nature of Christ, and affirmed that his body was corruptible. Severus, Bishop of Alexandria, was father of this heresy. They were also named Theodosians.

OF THE SIXTH CENTURY.

(Anno 598.) *Mahomet*, that signal impostor and libidinous robber, appeared. He held both Christ and Moses to be great Prophets; but reckoned himself a greater. He was for the worship of one God only; but retained Circumcision; prohibited eating swine's flesh, and drinking wine; maintained plurality of wives and concubines; dreamed of a sensual paradise; that,

[1] See Evagrius, l. i., c. 2, et seq.

all being predestinate to a fatality, they were not to avoid the pestilence, which, sweeping multitudes yearly away, providentially abates of the over-swarming numbers of a sect, who place the confidence of their religion being true in the progress of their armies and victories over the Christians. They also abstain from blood; expect their impostor's resurrection, after a thousand years; which being now effluxed, they pretend they did not hear what he said, and so attend a thousand more. This whole rhapsody of stuff is composed out of both Jewish, Pagan, and Christian, by the assistance of one Sergius, a Jew, a Nestorian monk. They also prohibited all human learning, and the means to obtain it, printing, lest the wiser world should discover its weakness; and forbade reading all books, save their Alcoran, or mingle of monstrous lies and contradictions, not worthy a rational man; and, therefore, they need no further confutation. So that this sect is founded on foul sensuality, fatality, tyranny, blood, and rebellion: their ringleaders, with several desperate Saracens, defecting from the Emperor Heraclius, their lawful sovereign.

OF THE SEVENTH CENTURY.

Monothelites, like Eutychians, affirming that there was but one will and nature in Christ; and these two heresies so infected the Church in the East, that some believed it provoked Almighty God to raise up and afflict them with the Arabian Impostor. There were several Councils during this century; as that of Lateran, Toledo, &c.—not orthodox.

Maronites, from one Maron, held with Eutychus that Christ had but one nature and will, and, since this, many of them have submitted to Popish doctrines, and by subtlety of that Church, are much corrupted.

OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY.

Albaneres, who taught oaths to be unlawful; and, though oppugning many errors of the Roman corrupted Church, yet held divers erroneous opinions of their own.

OF THE NINTH CENTURY.

Armenians. They, indeed, minister the Sacrament in both kinds, but with unleavened bread; yet hold not transubstantiation, or that sacraments confer grace. They communicate to infants; pray for the dead, but deny purgatory; and eat flesh on Fridays, but strictly observe Lent, and re-baptize converts from the Latin Church, and hold that all men's souls were created together.

The *Jacobites*, from Syria, are a sect of the former, holding sundry errors of the Eutychians, Nestorians, and Diascorus; but of late, as among the Maronites, the Jesuits much prevailed among them.

The *Coptics*, anciently in Egypt, are a sort of Jacobites, affirming but one nature in Christ; administer the Sacrament in both species, and also communicate to infants, deny purgatory, and reject extreme unction; observe the Lord's Day in cities only, and baptize in the church alone.

Abyssinian Christians, (believed to have been con-

verted by the Eunuch,) circumcise both sexes, not as a religious rite, but of ancient custom only, or (as some affirm) by reason of an unnatural excrescence. Among other superstitions, they also baptize yearly in lakes and rivers, upon the *Epiphany*; when, also, in imitation of our Saviour, they re-baptize; but not as a part of religion. They also abstain from unclean beasts; observe both Saturday and Sunday; administer the Communion in both kinds, in a spoon, and receive it standing, as do the Russians. They believe that infants, though dying unbaptized, are saved by the faith of their parents; acknowledge but one nature and will in Christ; believe the soul's traduction. Their clergy do not marry, but live by their labours, without tithes; eat flesh on Fridays, between Easter and Pentecost, and embrace the first three General Councils only; use pictures, but no sculpture in the churches.

Muscovite and *Russian*, under the Constantinopolitan patriarchs, differ little from the Greek Church, save in their wondrous superstitions, and that they exact marriage in their priests, and in the sacrament mingle the wine and bread together, as do the Greeks, which they deliver in a spoon.

Eastern India Christians, (long since converted by St. Thomas,) hold as yet divers things with the Reformed. For the rest, they use a hot iron when baptized, because of those words which it is said, "they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire." The Romanists have also among these brought in much of their superstition.

Greek and *Oriental*, so long orthodox, but now universally corrupted through that barbarism brought in amongst them by their dissensions, which exposed them to the Turks and Saracens, now for so many ages invading that so glorious Church and Empire, so that it is now overspread with ignorance, and relics of the many heresies we have enumerated, and of which divers of the errors in the Western Church are offsprings, through the craft of the Roman emissaries, who, by their bribes and other arts amongst the illiterate and miserable Clergy, have brought them lately to receive much of their trash. They do not yet all of them admit of the Papal Supremacy, nor mutilate the Blessed Sacrament, which they give in both kinds, and adore. Their priests also marry once. They use neither extreme unction nor confirmation. They admit flat, but no sculptured images, nor fall they down to either; neither believe they purgatory, though they favour an opinion of a third place. From blood and things suffocated they generally abstain. But that which formerly made the mighty stir against them, was their denying the procession of the Holy Ghost to be from the Father and the Son, yet baptizing in his name; whilst divers learned men believe that, for that article, *à filio* and *per filium*, in the sense of that Church, the difference consists only *de modo loquendi*.

Among the Fathers, they esteem chiefly St. Basil, St. Chrysostome, and Damascenus, whose writings they equal even with the Holy Scriptures. They observe four Lents, and pray for the dead, being under four

Patriarchs. They retain also monks of the Order of Saint Basil. And that part of their Church which were fetched over to the Roman party, was at the Council of Florence. Upon promises and hopes, and money dispersed among the indigent Bishops, by the Pope, they many of them submitted for the present; but, being afterwards deceived, though many proselyted, yet remains there a part, who would never be recovered to that Church. And of this it is thought there are more, going under the name of schismatics, among the Romanists, than there are of the Popish Church in all Europe besides.[1]

The *Godescalians*, (from one of that name,) were Predestinarians, affirming that Christ died for the elect only, and would not that all should be saved.

OF THE TENTH, ELEVENTH, TWELFTH, AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES.

The *Waldenses* and *Albigenses* rejected many Popish doctrines, though retaining a mixture of other errors; as that laymen might exercise the ministerial function; that wicked magistrates lost their right to govern, and are said not to use the Apostles' Creed; in which and several other imputations they have doubtless been exceedingly wronged by their most inplacable persecutors of the Romish Church; and are known to be a very ancient, simple, innocent, and devout sort of poor Chris-

[1] The history of that Florentine Council and transaction of this matter is published by Dr. Creighton, late Bishop of Bath and Wells.

tians, most barbarously murdered and disturbed; sending forth a continued succession of holy, though plain, poor men,—orthodox as to essentials, for aught that appears to the contrary, even from the very Apostles' time.

The Councils of *Lateran*, defining transubstantiation, and that Popes may depose Kings, and give away their states, &c., are justly to be ranked amongst the most wicked heresies.

The *Flagellanti* taught, that the expiation of sins was to be by corporal afflictions, and that none but such as with scourges disciplined themselves could be saved.

The *Fratricelli*, from one Hermanus, an Italian, held community of wives, and were a sect of obscene libertines, and put to death those children so begotten; were also against magistrates: and such were the

Framelists, all of them spawn of the Anabaptists, only changing names. A signal ringleader of this sect was the famous

John of Leyden and *Kniperdilling*, following out *Nicholas Storke*; as before were those

Libertines, *David George*, *Quintin*, and *Coppin*, who pretended themselves Messiahs; denying Christ to be the son of Mary, or true God; rejected magistrates, yet set up themselves as kings; holding community of wives and goods; went naked, and so met in their very conventicles, and were authors of infinite abominations, murders, rebellions, and mischiefs.

OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

The *Lollards* about this time appearing, affirmed that wealth and riches were not consistent with evangelical perfection; that the truly spiritual were not under the jurisdiction of magistrates. And these are said to have sprung from one Gualterus (so surnamed), and reported to hold, that Lucifer was unjustly banished heaven, and should yet be restored; denied the perpetual virginity of Mary, &c. But it is believed, that these latter sects were exceedingly misrepresented by their persecuting enemies, who could not endure any who began to see into and reject the tyranny of the popes. Upon which account they most spitefully persecuted the

Wicklivians, who forsook many of their doctrines; but erred in holding schools and universities unlawful, with all degree of honour and encouragement of learning; if (as is suspected) they were not in that also defamed by the common enemy. And the same tenets were publicly taught and improved by

John Huss and *Jerome of Prague*, totally opposing the Papists, in which it did not appear they rejected learning, being so well able to answer all their adversaries. Hence sprung the

OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Antinomians, totally rejecting the Law, as of no use under the Gospel; and that no works, good or evil, concerned men's salvation; but that good and evil were

indifferent in themselves, as only depending on God's despotic will; that nothing was essentially sinful or morally righteous; (though they might as well affirm it of Almighty God himself, which were most blasphemous.) That no man is punished for sin, and that even the greatest crimes are no sins in the godly; that Christ only operates good, and not the Christian; and that themselves were already justified, and all was so *ab æterno.* These opinions revived much in this later age, as did the *Anti-Sabbatarians,* who observed no solemn set day for the service of God.

Zuinglium Sacramentarium will have the holy communion to be a receiving only the signs and figures of Christ's body and blood, rejecting the notion of *really and truly.*

SECTION III.

HERESIES AND SECTS, FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT TIME.

1. OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

The Council of Trent, which, imposing no fewer than eleven new Articles; some of them notoriously false, others of matter disputable, under pain of damnation to those who could not swallow them; cut off all terms of that Reformation, which all Christendom loudly called for; and, adding those Articles to the *Athanasian Symbol,* transferred the concluding anathema thereof to the foot of their monstrous doctrine: all this by a cabal of the Popes, and contrary to the endeavours and pro-

testations of the most learned doctors, princes, and others, who had their representatives in that assembly, as is made out plainly by the modest writers and most impartial historians of their own communion. So that this Council's decrees may be justly reckoned among the most dangerous heresies that ever appeared in the Christian Church.[1]

Faustus Socinus (or modern Arian, as well as Pelagian) was a witty Italian, who affirmed men to have been naturally mortal before the Fall, having no original righteousness; that the light of nature imparted no knowledge of God; that man, having no original sin, could fulfil the Law; that God has no prescience of contingencies determinatively, or of man's free actions; that the causes of predestination are in ourselves, and may be frustrated; that God, without any satisfaction, might with justice have pardoned sin; that Christ did not satisfy for them, but only as an extraordinarily just and virtuous person, not as God, but by his patience, submission, piety, and excellent example obtained faculty for us to satisfy for ourselves, by faith and obedience; that Christ died for Himself, and for the mortality and infirmity of our nature; that eternal death is only a continuance in death, or rather annihilation: which is all that is meant by hell; that Satan was created evil; and so he renders God the author of all sin; that nothing is to be believed, save what is evident both to sense and reason; and, there-

[1] Of this more fully when we come to speak of the Popish errors in this chapter.

fore, they reject the Trinity, holding that the Holy Ghost is not really God, but a certain virtue and quality; and were, therefore, of old called *anti-Trinitarians*, denying the eternal generation of our Blessed Saviour. In a word, that Christ is not God, question His incarnation, yet worship Him, and become idolators.

They also deny the resurrection of the same body; and turn the whole mystery of Christ into metaphor and figure, as when He is called a Priest, a Justifier, &c.; they say He was the image only of a Priest, and not a Saviour by His own power, nor in a true sense offered for us, but in shadow; and, therefore, did not bear our guilt, rejecting the doctrine of satisfaction further than that He was an extraordinary person, whose piety, singular virtues, and passion were meritorious and of Divine power, and for which, and His sufferings in maintaining His religion, He is thus exalted.

All which seems to be but a refining upon the Pagan, who consecrated their heroes, &c.; and so evacuate the infinitely Divine love, which consisted in abasing the Deity for man's redemption. A sucker of this rotten stock has lately appeared in a treatise called *Theologia Polito-Philosophica*, ascribed to Spinosa, whose drift is to undermine the truth and value of Holy Scriptures, and to turn religion into morality only; and that for the rest, they are speculations which may be believed or neglected, as men please, without any use of faith or any supernatural grace; that the magistrate is the infallible judge, &c. A composition of many very dangerous opinions, craftily and insinuatively introduced

by the subtlety of Satan, Hobbs, Anabaptists, Quakers, Theists, and Atheists, and setting up natural reason above revelation, and creating difficulties and doubts where there are none, accommodated to Heathen as well as to Christians. In the mean time, none have more successfully proved the verity of the Christian religion than the Socinians, especially Placæus, and are in some of their writings excellent Textuaries. Against the Socinians, especially in what concerns the satisfaction of Christ, Grotius has most incomparably written, Junius, our Bishop Pearson,[1] Dr. Tillotson, and many others.

In this century rose the famous

Martin Luther, author of that famous Reformation in Germany, raised just a hundred years from the perfidious burning of John Huss and his companion Jerome, according as was predicted. Martin was an Augustine friar, who took occasion, from the intolerable encroachments and doctrine of the Roman Church, preaching up Indulgences, to examine and dispute against their many corruptions, with wonderful success; reforming many of that country, and spreading what he taught far and wide—wonderfully protected by Almighty God against the most powerful adversaries. Among some more tolerable errors, he rejected the Epistle to the Hebrews, St. James, and the Second of Peter, the two last of St. John, and the Apocalypse, as not canonical; and in point of the sacrament, holding a real gross receiving of the flesh and blood of Christ in and with the sacra-

[1] On the Creed, p. 313.

mental elements, by way of *Consubstantiation*. But the more moderate party followed the meek and learned *Melancthon*, who favoured Calvin in most things, saving the rigid decrees.

John Calvin, albeit an admirable divine, and one of the most thorough reformers, a person of a clear, piercing understanding, pure Latin fluent expression, and, for the most part, of sound orthodox principles, held yet some opinions not so generally embraced among the best reformed. Especially to be rejected is, what to some appears, as if he should have denied the Son to be God of God, but of Himself; and that our Blessed Lord, despairing on the cross, was in the state of the damned, though not continuing in it. And that neither Church nor Magistrate oblige the conscience, &c. Some things no less offensive to princes and governors he seems to favour, in the last chapter of his (otherwise) incomparable Institution; that saving faith is inadmissible; teaches certainty of salvation; denies free-will in spiritual things. As to the Blessed Sacrament, they receive it standing, and affirm the mystery to be the believing in Christ, and eating by faith, in remembrance of the death of Christ, without any notion of other union with him.

This, however, many of his followers explain more to the sense of the Church of England. But the great and main controversy in that peremptory assertion, that God of His mere pleasure decreed to deny to some the grace of saving faith and repentance, without any motive or cause found in one man more than in another;

but resolving to inflict damnation irreversibly, or, as they term it, *absolute reprobation*, without any respect to original or actual sin. This, indeed, is by some interpreted; others affirm the contrary, and that he only held that God's purpose was indeed to deny grace to some, by way of *preterition*, or, rather, *non-election*, and electing others freely without foresight. And truly the modern Calvinists utterly deny God's decreeing the damnation of any single person, except for sin. But that some there were whose impenitence he resolved not to cure; but none whom He has not under obligation to repentance; distinguishing between God's will of purpose, determining events; and His legislative will, determining His creature's duty; and that yet there is no contrariety between these wills.

They affirm, that God's eternal purpose to save, of lapsed man, all who believe and persevere, is not His whole decree of predestination; nor His resolution to condemn all who persist in infidelity, the sum and whole of His reprobation. But, besides this general purpose, they acknowledge a decree to give to a select number of persons grace and glory, and to leave others in that sin and misery derived on them by the Fall. They say not that God's decree offers violence to our will, or any natural faculty of it, or liberty essential to it, unless it be to corrupt lusts and evil inclinations, but that electing love renders men willing, and that holiness is an effect of election, and sin, no effect of reprobation, but its consequence. Nor affirm they that sin is a cause of preterition or non-election

comparatively considered; but God's good pleasure to save (for example) Peter, and condemn Judas, being both by nature alike corrupted; so that God dooms none, but for sin.

But to temper these severe doctrines of decrees, (anno 1566) *Molinus*, a Jesuit, excogitated a *Scientia media*, by which Almighty God, before any act of His own will, did know which way the will of the creature would incline, upon supposition that He afford such assistance, and by which He would have known the contrary, had the will made use of its liberty to turn to the other way. This is, in truth, to make in God a middle or mixed knowledge, as if He understood not what He decreed.

Remonstrants, who, in opposition to the Calvinist, held that election to life was the will of Almighty God, to save such as faithfully persevered.

That election was sometimes absolute, sometimes conditional. That faith is a condition, and that in its action the light of reason is necessary.

That faith and obedience are foreseen of God; and election accordingly.

That some elect may totally and finally fall away, and therefore no certainty of election immutable. That God decrees none to damnation, merely of His own will, but upon prescience.

The sum is, that God ordained to save all those in, for, and through Christ, who, being fallen and under the dominion of sin, do by the aid of the Holy Ghost firmly persevere in faith and obedience.

Secondly. That our Blessed Saviour died not for any particular person only, but effectually for all, by imputation, who lay hold upon Him; nay, though there had been no actual application of it to any individual.

They farther affirm, that this universal grace is exhibited to all, by which (having liberty of will) one may perform the duty and obtain salvation; and that God saves some by decree determined to singular persons sometimes, as from eternity foreseeing their faith and perseverance.

That Christ by His precious blood established no new Covenant, but procured a right and title from His Father to make what Covenant He pleased; or that Christ died for all, that by His death He might atone for all, and make remission of sin conditionally; i.e. that none but true believers should have benefit of it.

That man, having freedom of will, is not justified by faith alone; but that God accepts and esteems our imperfect graces of faith and obedience as meritorious, as if we were impeccable.

Thirdly. That original sin of itself condemns none, and that natural men, by the right use of the gifts of nature, obtain saving grace; God having afforded means sufficient to bring them to Christ.

Fourthly. That, by the Fall, the will of itself was never corrupted, but only weakened, obscured, and perplexed, through the irregularity of the action.

That no new gifts are infused upon our conversion, and consequently faith is no infused grace, but the act of man.

Fifthly. That moral grace renders the natural man spiritual.

That men may frustrate their own conversions, and that grace and free will co-operate in conversion; and for the manner of this co-operation, it is not to be thought irresistible, the Scripture affirming some did resist the Holy Ghost.[1]

That perseverance is a condition of the Covenant, not an effect of election.

That God affords means to the faithful, sufficient for perseverance, but that it is in the choice of our own will.

That even some regenerate persons may fall from grace and salvation, and therefore there is no assurance of perseverance in this life, without a special revelation; wherefore, the contrary doctrine is hurtful, being an occasion of presumption.

That temporary faith, and that which is called justifying, differ only in permanency; so that, on the whole matter, such as are engrafted in Christ, by a lively working faith, may be conquerors, Christ being ready to assist them, provided that, for their parts, they prepare for encounter, and implore his help, and be not wanting to themselves in performing their duty; but that through their own negligence they fall from those principles of saving grace, by which they are supported through Christ.

Thus, as to election, Arminius held four decrees. The *first* is the decree of sending Christ to redeem mankind.

[1] Acts, vii., 51.

Secondly. To give life to believers.

Thirdly. To afford grace and strength sufficient to the faithful; and *lastly*, the decree of giving salvation to those particular persons, who God foresees will believe and persevere in the faith.

Now, against these opinions, which greatly disquieted the *Calvinists*, and some others of the orthodox, was a Synod called at Dort (A.D. 1618) in Holland, by a meeting of the Protestant divines of the Reformation, to examine and determine the tenets of Arminius.

The *Supra-lapsarians* (for so were their opinions distinguished) consisted in these three articles: *First.* That God decreed the creation of mankind to different ends, which were to have for object,

Firstly. The decree of committing sin, whereof the object must be man created, but not corrupted.

Secondly. The decree of electing and reprobating, which for object must have man both created and corrupted. Thus making God the willer of sin, and (contrary to His own words expressly in Scripture) He would not have all men to be saved, but propounded His Word to reprobates, merely to damn them without excuse.

The *Sublapsarians'* opinion was, that God had decreed irresistible conversion and salvation of some particular persons, and the permission of some men's impenitence and perdition; and affirm that Adam was made a common person, and a federal as well as natural head, and so he sinning drew in all his posterity with him.[1]

[1] The history of all these doctrines defended and reproved, see Dr. Heylin, (*pro*) in his *Historia Quinquarticularis*, &c., by Dr.

Gomarus was another rigid Belgian, holding God's eternal and irreversible decrees, and that thereupon some, who were moved to a holy life, persevered, and never fell away; whilst others, abandoned to wickedness and the common vices of mankind, lay totally involved in sin; while Arminius, less severe, represented God a loving and tender Father, and as to persons, as ready to pardon repentants through Christ, as to punish obstinate sinners. Thus, whilst Gomarus plainly made God author of sin and the hardener of obstinate sinners, such as have diligently consulted both the Scriptures and the ancients, find the primitive Fathers were for freedom of will. From hence proceeded the equity of rewards and punishments, yet so as totally flowing from the Divine beneficence and gracious promises, whose free gift it was, and whose assistance was absolutely necessary. In the mean time, St. Augustine (first of all) in dispute with Pelagius, relinquished, indeed, the name of liberty, as inclining to the severer decree; whilst all over Greece and Asia the ancient and more gentle opinion was retained.

In the Western world and over Europe, this great name of St. Augustine drew many sectators, and especially when (after the wrangling schools hardly ever read, or were acquainted with any other doctor) it was disputed between the Franciscans and Dominicans, what was that Father's sense; until Luther, out of a monastery of St. Augustine, fiercely maintained that man had

Hickman, (*con.*) *Hist. Quinquarticularis exarticulata*, &c., 8vo. (1673) in which are divers particulars worthy of note.

no free will, which seemed so unreasonable to the learned Erasmus, that he mainly set himself to oppose it, and by his arguments the mild and modern Melancthon (until now Luther's great friend) recanted, which at last brought Luther himself also to alter his opinion. But then comes Calvin, and more vigorously than ever asserts it than either, adding (what was never before heard of) that a true saving faith was perpetual, and could not be lost. Which confidence of salvation was proof against the ill effect of whatever wasting or grievous sin a man might fall into. And this opinion was also confirmed by his colleague, Beza, at Geneva, Zanchy, Ursinus, Piscator, and others in Germany, and arrived to that excess, as to maintain a necessity of sinning depended on the first cause.

This gave the Lutherans fresh occasion to quarrel, especially about the Eucharist, which in the beginning only sharpened men's wits; but, when certain young scholars at Geneva, in the Palatinate and other places, began to be called assemblies, and would be ordering church matters, and broaching these novelties as infallible doctrines, not admitting any contradiction, (for to such they denied the sacraments and holy ordinances) it became insolent and altogether insufferable, disturbing the civil government, and that so dangerously, that the States of Holland were forced to repress both parties, upon solemn hearing. And thus far had ungoverned zeal, or pride of victory, or melancholy, proceeded upon some persons, while Christians should admit no man's fancies or pretences, but what is plainly

evident in Holy Scripture and sound reason, with modesty and discretion.

We have been longer on these particulars, because so greatly disturbing the peace of the reformed Church in this latter age. Upon which account we pass to the no less perturbators of the quiet and beauty of that Christian charity, so earnestly recommended by our Blessed Saviour, the

Presbyterians, of late more turbulent in England, more peevish and singularly rigid than any of the Calvinists, especially the more sober and learned French, amongst whom have appeared many of excellent judgment and piety. These Presbyterians, formerly denominated *Puritans* and *Precisians*, sprang up in the reign of the famous Queen Elizabeth, Knox the Scot, and some other divines of the reformed, flying into Germany during the persecution under Queen Mary. These, after her death returning into England, molested the decent settlement of the Church, affirming that it was to be wholly under the jurisdiction of Presbytery and eldership, bishops being, as they affirmed, no distinct order, and that so it continued for the first three hundred years after Christ.[1]

That the power of ordination is with the Presbytery in common with the bishop, and that their order, not that of bishops only, is *jure divino*; that discipline and power of the keys is as much theirs to dispense; that

[1] They pretend in their favour: St. Jerome, Epist. ad Evagrium; Irenæus, l. 4; Cont. Hæres., c. 43, 44; Eusebius, l. 5, c. 23; Titus, i., 6, 7.

for helps in government, there must be deacons and deaconesses, to take care of the poor widows and orphans, and attend on works of charity, so that the preachers may wholly vacate to the Word; but that those helpers might not preach the Gospel, and such they affirmed were Philip and his daughters.

That Presbyters received their succession from the Apostles as to preaching and administration of the Sacraments and discipline; but were in this inferior, as not immediately called by Christ, nor infallible, nor sent into the world, as the Apostles were, but consigned to particular places.

They acknowledge bishops were so called of ancient time, as *præpositi* and superintendants, till heresy spreading, they (the Presbyters) obtained the same authority, the bishops retaining only majority or pre-eminence of order, (not of authority) for the better composing of Church matters, as the faithful multiplied, and proselytes came in. But that this was temporary only, and by consent for order's sake; and in that capacity allow St. Peter might be as it were *Chairman* or Prolocutor, to moderate amongst the college of Apostles. And that in this sense they are still content to allow of bishops, but not as of Divine right, or to lord it over the rest as diocesan, or as having sole faculty of ordaining without the Presbytery.

They form their government (as pretended) from the Apostles, appointing Presbyters and Deacons in all their Churches; whereas, indeed, *Presbyter* signified old, grave, and experienced persons only, who were bishops,

circumspect, vigilant; the *Deacons*, servants and ministers, (as the very name imports) and St. Paul uses the name promiscuously, which indeed they take great hold of. They also affirm, that their ruling Elders are to take off (as we said) the burden from the preacher, as men of more skill and experience in secular affairs. Also, that the power and right of electing ministers was originally in the people, as well as the clergy, though not ordination,[1] and that they had power of the keys. And that, when Christ said, "Tell it to the Church,"[2] his meaning was to all the Apostles together, as the Universal Church Representatives.

They say one may teach, and not preach, that is, advise, exhort, and so are *Doctors* not *Pastors*. Their ruling Elders are distinct from Presbyters, or preaching Elders, and have seats in consistory, for the better ordering the Church in its civil and decent government.

That Timothy and Titus were Evangelists, not settled bishops or Presbyters, but extraordinary messengers of St. Paul, and upon that score preached, but were no farther infallible than as they observed his doctrine and direction; Evangelists being such as were sent and delegated by Christ and His Apostles, as messengers having faculty to preach and constitute Churches from place to place itinerally, but still by virtue of canon and rule from the Apostles, who had power only to confirm converts. They therefore held, that a bishop cannot legally excommunicate without the Presbytery, and affirm that even kings, as well as

[1] From I. Tim., iv., 14. [2] S. Matt., xviii., 17.

inferior magistrates, may be obnoxious to and under that censure, urging that of Uzziah and Theodosius. That public scandalists should be suspended the Eucharist, &c.

They are most of them Predestinarians; hold faith to consist in a confident belief and a certain familiar recumbency on Christ. That the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is only commemorative; the elements, signs and figures, and call it eating by faith; in most other opinions sound and orthodox.

Of the preciser sort of these, were (as we said) those formerly called *Puritans*, and from their patron

Brownists, who generally rejected the Lord's Prayer, as stilts for those of lame intellectuals and babes in grace, as also all set forms, which yet the Calvinists both allowed and practised abroad; held consecration of churches, decent vestments, holy-days, and other ceremonies profane and anti-Christian; and some of them, ordination of ministers, refusing to communicate with those whom they accounted wicked; and that the Holy Sacrament, administered by a scandalous Presbyter, was ineffectual, &c.

Erastus, (no unlearned Protestant physician) misliking Calvin's model, was against all Ecclesiastical Polity.

I omit the learned *Episcopius* and *Coarcelæus*, Divines and Professors in Holland, who are suspected to have favoured some opinions inclining to Socinianism. They held it unlawful to eat blood, and thought the Holy Eucharist may be administered by a lay person; nor did Grotius dislike it.

And now, out of all these is risen another sect, taking advantage of the dissensions and Church disturbances during the late rebellion in England, who, as departing from all the churches and parties hitherto named, call themselves

Independents, who consist of certain peculiar assemblies or gathered congregations; and these, being of a select number, meeting privately, renounce all ceremony, rites, and polity, or indeed learning, as wholly unnecessary in the ministry, so that any private man may exercise the spiritual function, with power of Church censure, and other offices. And in some of their meetings their women determine ecclesiastical causes, and excommunicate, private persons administering the Holy Sacrament. The magistrate marries, and may pronounce divorces, which they do on slight occasions.

Whilst thus they would avoid all superstition, they are much affected to giving only Scripture names to all their children, especially Old Testament ones. In preaching, seldom use they text or connexion, but miserably ramble both in prayer and sermons, which they extend to an exceeding length, uttered with strange familiar expressions. Nor is this exercise confined to any one; but they bid the Psalms, pray, preach, yelp, according as any of the assembly finds himself stirred by the Spirit; and when any one prophesies, another examines his doctrine. They confer baptism only on the children of their own assembly, and communicate with no reformed church. Nor use they any prayer

preparative at the Eucharist, but receive the elements, sitting at the Table, and are covered, or rather indeed have no Table, as it happens, to avoid (as pretended) superstition. Nor compel they any in matters of religion and worship; nor call they any thing by the vulgar name in common conversation, using the first, second, third, &c., day, instead of Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, &c., and the like of the months. This sect they held to be the beginning of the kingdom of Christ, which is to last on earth a thousand years; affecting singularity, their word in ordinary discourse is *yea, nay.*

Anabaptists (and modern *Donatists*) are of divers and very dangerous opinions, and that through the great Providence of God; since, should they once unite, their principles and zeal would give danger to the States they live in, as we have instanced in the history of John of Leyden, David George, and other impure sects among them. Some allow not our Blessed Saviour taking flesh of the Virgin Mary, but passing through her, as water through a pipe; nor will they have him to be God. Some re-baptize, but christen none of their own children, till adult; hold the enjoyment of an earthly monarchy, after the Day of Judgment; are assertors of free will, boasting the being an unsinning Church. They perform all divine offices by laymen, reject magistrates; that dominion is founded in grace, and belongs to the saints only, who are to have all in common. They refuse to take any oath before the magistrate for the clearing any controversy. They

separate from all others as impure, and yet deny original sin, pretend to frequent revelations; and some are Adamites, Muggletonians, and Libertines, denying the Resurrection.

Out of these, and others like them, are spawned another enthusiastic sect, the

Quakers, so called from (at the first) a certain affected fit of shivering, which invades the enthusiast, when he holds forth, that is, in their language, preaches. Their doctrine seems to be a mixture of all heresies. They deny the Divinity of Christ; baptize, not as of necessity, nor make any account of it, affirming it to be only spiritual. Nor do they marry, receive or use the Sacrament, but as a thing indifferent. They deny also the Resurrection, and with the Sadducees say it is past. For the rest, they turn the Scriptures into allegory, and interpret accordingly the Fall of Adam, and other places, which they reject as impertinent, except suggested by the lights and impulses within, which they say is the Rule of Faith; not willing to answer that text which tells them, that the spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets, because it teaches submission to pastors and magistrates, and to the judgments of others. Yet hold they it utterly unlawful to use arms, or repulse the greatest injury; will not take any oath, or so much as use the common terms of civility either with superiors or inferiors. *Thou* and *thee* is their language to their greatest king, without baring the head, or using the least respect. They meet in the streets, and fields, and barns, as the spirit seizes

them. A frugal, plain, silent, yet crafty sect, allowing their women to preach, pretending the most primitive simplicity.

But, though the *Quakers* will not draw sword, so much as in their own defence, yet another sect there is, of *Anabaptists*, who, dreaming of a personal descent of Christ, to set up a more than Jewish temporal kingdom, are for a

Fifth Monarchy. Indeed, a most desperate and truculent sect, affirming that the dominion of the earth, belonging to King Jesus only, upon presumption of extraordinary help and miraculous assistance, when ten shall put to flight ten thousand, have sometimes (and not long since with us) risen desperately, killing and murdering all they met with, nor terrified either by arms or numbers, rush upon inevitable danger, believing an immediate presence of Christ, to take the possession out of the hands of the worldly power, and distribute it among them, who are to reign with Him a thousand years. It is incredible how few of these enthusiasts have encountered thousands of armed and disciplined men without fear, though they always miscarried in their delusive enterprises, as consisting of mechanics, very ignorant and poor, abused people. Thus is another sect known by the name of

Seekers, who (as St. Paul characterizes them) are always learning and doubting, without ever coming to the knowledge of the truth, but are continually passing from one church and sect to another.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

About the beginning of this century appeared, in Germany, the

Rosi-crucians, a certain chymical sect, among whom was lately the famous Jacob Böhmen, their religion consisting mostly in contemplation of nature, raptures, and spiritualizing the progress of their great work; great enthusiasts, but of a silent, innocent deportment, for the most part; rather a sort of philosophic monks, conversing little with the world, save those of their own *adepti.*

Antoinette de Bourignon: she was of Brabant, born to riches, and, going out of her country, (as not so safe for one who, though of the Romish Communion, held divers opinions not current amongst them) retired into Friezeland. What she held may be collected from her books, which indeed are full of surprising things. She seemed to communicate with any Christians,—was very charitable. For the rest, a visionary; and one who, not finding there was any religion to her fancy, would needs set up a new sect, and has taken great pains in no fewer than eighteen or twenty volumes, to preach to all the world. The moral part is delivered in no ordinary style; the rest are dreams, paradoxes, and mysteries, which have begun to take with some less wary persons. They seem to affect neither Papists, Lutherans, Calvinists, Socinians, nor Anabaptists, nor reject them; all are welcome to their communion, without being obliged to change their religion; whilst with them they

practise outwardly none at all, frequenting neither mass nor sermon. Their assemblies are where they happen to be—to-day going to the Popish Chapel, next day to the Protestant Church, and sometimes to none at all, through the whole year or their life-time: professing an indifference for all; looking upon acts of piety as things external, and rather tending to alienate the soul and mind from internal commerce with God. And this leads us to the last we shall mention in this Chapter, (till we come to the corrupted Church of Rome) namely, the

Quietists, sectators of the Jesuit Molino; which at present make such noise in the world, because in so many things they resemble the *Antoinettes*.

This Jesuit, being a Spaniard, appeared first at Naples, and seems to have been a species of those *illuminati*, who formerly acted their part in Spain.

Their worship is almost altogether as invisible, only that they not only speak with indifference, but with some zeal against all ordinances (of which sort others have been even in this our country). Their prayers and devotions are wholly mental; they reject rosaries, houses, and offices, sacraments, masses, resigning themselves wholly to the motions of the spirit within, quiet and without concern; so that the only means to obtain this tranquil state is that which they term *inaction*, which, by a cessation of all prayer and desires, ends in a kind of exinanition of all their faculties; on which the Holy Spirit is invited to descend. *Sileant creaturæ, et Dominus loquatur.*

During this exercise, they shut out all external objects, and seem hardly to use any function of life and sense, as in an ecstasy or illapse, whilst God is himself speaking immediately within them. But enough of these.

Our mystic Theologues, Father Barnes, Madame Therise, have much of this, though not altogether so refined; for which we refer the curious to their books.

But thus far have unguarded zeal, spiritual pride, ignorance, and melancholy, prevailed on some persons, whilst all should admire no men's fancies or pretences, but what is proof with Scripture, that sure Word of Prophecy. For it is certain Christ will never appear in any of these sectarian ways; forewarning us that, whereas many shall say, *Lo! here is Christ, and there is Christ,* we should not believe them; for many false Christs shall come, and shall deceive many.

We have already spoken sufficiently of the Pagan, Jewish, and philosophical errors, which cannot so properly be ranked amongst the heresies, as having never been Christian. Yet, forasmuch as many Atheists have outwardly professed that worthy name, such we are also to number among the archest of them, especially such as strike at the most fundamental Christian truths, and whose doctrines comply not with the necessary and innocent formalities of government. Such at no hand are tolerable, nor their leaders, who are to be rather looked upon as monsters and madmen, than heretics. And happy it is, that they seldom appear but in single

parties, whose principles, if embraced by multitudes, would soon put the world in confusion.

Of these, besides some Anabaptists and Fifth-Monarchists we have mentioned, was the devilish John Basilides, Duke of Muscovy, one who, whilst he prayed and fasted in a prodigious manner, leading a severe life, was yet never outdone by Nero, Caligula, or Domitian, in wickedness and cruelty. This impostor pretended visions and revelations, and some thought the Devil took advantage of the enthusiastic devotee, to represent himself an angel of light, encouraging him in his inhuman courses.

Such was the blasphemous *Hacket*, who so exceeded in ardent prayer, that he would draw tears, and even ravish his hearers.

Instruments of such extraordinary talents, both as to preaching and praying, God sometimes permits, when men are weary and do not profit under sound doctrine. And so most of the wicked doings in the world have prospered under a mask of piety, as by sad experience we have felt and seen, by the murder of our excellent King, and the progress of our late zealots, usurping both Church and State, to the bringing-in of those damnable heresies amongst us, and leading away very many innocent and simple persons, besides those who came into their party, out of ambition, faction, revenge, covetousness, hypocrisy, discontent, to the almost total subversion of all religion. For this sort of seducers and leaders of parties are commonly passionate and furious, vehement in their reproof of others, indulgent

to themselves, full of spiritual pride, impatient of contradiction, sour in conversation, unsociable, detracting, implacable, and always complaining of others' sin. They cancel the memorials of the greatest mysteries of our Redemption. Their confession and catechisms consist chiefly of speculative notions, abstractions, raptures, and illapses; yet seldom do they die in cold blood for their religion; but elect their proselytes from among the wealthy, vitious, and easy, as all experience has shown the world. In a word, by their fruits ye shall know them.

We omit to speak of Vanini, Pomponati, Bruno, Spinosa, Hobbs, and other theists, not willing to bring Descartes and our late pure Materialists (making men but engines), into the list. The pride, ostentation, and singularity, among some of them render them suspected to be either of no or very little religion, whilst they have asserted principles so destructive to it. Such our late philosopher of Malmesbury, who tells us that there is no such thing as good or evil, justice or injustice, but that power and dominion is the measure of right and wrong; that subjects are to conform to the religion of the State; and of the same opinion the Theologico-politician Spinosa and his singular sectators.

SECTION IV.

OF THE CORRUPTIONS OF THE ROMISH CHURCH.

PART I.

1. HOLY SCRIPTURE NOT THE RULE OF FAITH.
2. LEGENDS.
3. IMAGE WORSHIP.
4. RELICS.
5. SHAM-MIRACLES.
6. JUBILEES.
7. INDULGENCES AND PARDONS.
8. PURGATORY.
9. MONASTIC ORDERS.

PART II.

1. ERRONEOUS DOCTRINES.
2. FALSE SACRAMENTS.
3. TRANSUBSTANTIATION.
4. OF THE INTENTION OF THE PRIEST.
5. DENIAL OF THE CUP TO THE LAITY.
6. DEIFICATION OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

PART III.

1. PAPACY.
2. CONCLUSION.

Thus have we briefly surveyed most of the ancient and later heresies, sects, schisms, and dissensions from the Christian faith. Amongst which there is hardly yet any to be found that has more endangered, disturbed, and corrupted the pure and saving doctrine of the Spouse of Christ, His Holy Catholic Church, than those who most of all arrogate to themselves the only name of CATHOLIC, as peculiar to them alone, whilst, by the adjunct to it, they fall into so notorious and illogical a contradiction. And these are the maintainers of the present Roman Pontifician Tridentine doctrine, rightly enough by the reformed styled *Papists* and *Papalines;* and by some their religion, anti-Christian.

It is not here mentioned last, because the newest, (for the mystery of this iniquity began to work betimes),

but because they have of the latest, that is, from the time of the Trent Council, adopted so many errors and things altogether indifferent, and some notoriously false, into Articles of Faith implicit, and as doctrines infallible, which are, in truth, but men's traditions.

These, therefore, I have reserved, to bring up the rear, who else indeed may be called the captain and ringleader of all the rest, or as retaining something from the very Heathen and Pagans, as will appear in this recension. In the mean while, the true Christian religion, (to which all pretend) miserably since perverted, was of old reverend for its pure and naked simplicity. For when afterwards, persecution ceasing by the conversion of the Emperors to the true faith, the Church being cherished by them, it grew opulent and at ease; and when they began to set it out with the flourishes of philosophy, mingled with Jews, Greeks, and other proselytes, who cast in the ceremonies of their countries, that so the majesty of it might appear more pompous and splendid, and invite the unconverted Pagans; though, doubtless, something of this might be convenient at first, as decently (and not tumultuarily at once) to bury former superstitions and inveterate usages; yet, by continuing them too long, and growing fond of them when that necessity was past, they became the opinions of men; first, perhaps, but of private persons and families, but at last the judgment of some Churches, and so by degrees and custom or for interest, (while the bishops and spiritual watchmen slept or were perverted) and by the eloquence of orators

and the suffrages of corrupted synods, (after the first four General Councils) were changed into necessary laws, decrees, and ordinances, which, through ignorance of succeeding times, by subtle and dark disputes, and scholastical niceties, have been ever since defended.

These advantagers, the Bishops of Rome, men of unlimited authority and ambition, prevailing over the facility and ignorance of Princes, in those dark times, began to insinuate themselves into State affairs; and, whilst the Emperors were absent and distracted by wars and dissensions elsewhere, begun and fomented by these crafty men, settled themselves in the chief and metropolitan city; at first, but as in trust only, being reputed holy and religious persons; but in time challenging it as their own, fortified by a pretended and notoriously forged, chimerical donation of Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, and by like acts, during those confused times in the Roman State through the Christian world, when growing jealous of Constantinople, and other cities of Asia and Egypt, and fearing to be eclipsed, the Bishops of Rome began to establish a kind of ecclesiastical kingdom and polity, in which Cardinals, creatures of their own making from simple priests, but now of none but Princes and great persons, being Judges lateral—they assumed the very height of empire: and under the title of *Servi Servorum*, in effect proclaim themselves *Domini Dominorum*, Christ's only Infallible Vicars upon Earth, above all principalities and powers whatsoever, and taking to

themselves a Triple Crown, as reigning over Earth, Hell, and Heaven.

And because, indeed, most of the western parts had received a Christianity from Rome, while the successors of St. Peter were entirely orthodox, all the rites of the Latin Church were embraced, and the Latin tongue in all her offices, as being then the common and vulgar language. But, not content with this, they by degrees introduce and bring in all things else sacred into their power; impose and set forth new decrees, interpret the old, and alter what they please. And that these matters might not be looked into, sacrilegiously they take away the Holy Scriptures out of the hands of the people, making it almost capital in them so much as to have or read them, lest they should discover the avarice, pride, simonry, and fraud of their corrupt mysteries and traditions, tending only to their profit, honour, and secular advantages. And this proceeding to that height of exorbitance, and rendering it no longer tolerable, made a necessity of reformation, most providentially assisted by the sudden and remarkable appearance of the most learned and pious men that had been for a thousand years before.

These, aided by the no less admirable invention of printing, began with more ease to examine the truth of things; and by preaching, conferences, and writing, to discover the monstrous and intolerable corruptions of the Roman Church.

PART I.

1. HOLY SCRIPTURE NOT THE RULE OF FAITH.

Touching the Holy Scriptures, (which are the source and living fountain of all truth) the Romanists regard it not as the Rule of Faith, adopt most of the Apocryphal Books into the Canon, making them and their own traditions of equal authority with the Divine Oracles, not only against the current of all antiquity, but asserting by them divers doubtful matters, as of faith, and some notoriously erroneous. As to the text, they prefer the vulgar Latin before the Hebrew and Greek, which are the true originals, concealing them and all translations from the people. They say, the Holy Scriptures are incompetent to decide controversies, or examine doctrines by, because there is, indeed, no mention in them of their Purgatory, Indulgences, Private Masses, Image-worship, Invocation of Saints, Pilgrimages, Reliques, and other impertinences, which they fear to hazard, if brought to that touchstone, or consent of the Universal Church and Councils, for above four hundred years after Christ. In a word, nothing is more common among the controvertists than that the Scriptures are of no absolute necessity, are obscure, insufficient, have no self-authority, were consulted upon occasion only; that divers Books are lost, or have been altered, and they dispense with sundry things commanded in them, and challenge the Church's approbation, (that is, the Roman,) which gives the right and true interpre-

tation of Scripture. They make tradition the Rule of Faith, or a Council wherein the Pope presides.[1]

And, as they conceal the Scriptures, so retain they the public service and devotions in a tongue understood by the Priests alone. They affirm the Church to be a Corporation or society of men, professors of the same faith, and in communion of the same sacraments, under legitimate pastors, whereof the Pope is chief. That this Church has been always visible and infallible, and that out of it is no salvation, damning all Christians in the world besides themselves.

2. LEGENDS.

They substitute abundance of Legends and pious frauds, recounting the lives and examples of some who never were, and of others who, being reputed saints, are set out with blasphemies and ridiculous extravagances beyond the very Alcoran; as that St. Francis was Chancellor, High Treasurer, and Privy Councillor of Christ, and made of the same spirit with God; that he had all the virtues of the saints in both Testaments; that Friar Leon saw him descend from heaven, having in his hand a scroll, in which was written, *This man is the grace of God;* and that, being indisposed, St. John

[1] I am not willing to bring the Fathers into this list; yet it being so evident that there were mistakes—not to call it corruption, comparable to that of the Church of Rome—they are not to be passed by, for caution at least, and that we may not be carried away to error by great names; no, though angels should preach any other doctrine.

the Baptist, St. John the Evangelist, the Blessed Virgin, and St. Michael, the archangel, came to comfort him; whilst an angel played him asleep with a fiddle, and immediately healed him; that the nature of man (like Christ) was dignified by him; that at every anniversary of his birth souls were *gratis* loosed from Purgatory.

It would fill a volume but to describe a few more of these pretended Saints, the miracles they performed, and a thousand impertinent trifles, full of the grossest fables, which yet they preach to the people, and recommend for their invitation; as those of St. Anthony, Christopher, Nicolas, and others—full of superstition, things ridiculous, and (as St. Peter's expression[1] is) *cunningly devised fables.* For they invoke, build altars to, worship St. Lazarus, which St. Chrysostom affirms to be a parable only; St. Martin, who waited, forsooth, upon our Blessed Lord at the Table, when He instituted the Holy Eucharist; chased the Pagans out of France in the time of the Goths; whereas, neither then, nor ages after, did that nation come into France. St. Ursula's eleven thousand Virgins; St. George, the Lady, and the Dragon, which was, doubtless, but an emblem; St. Dominic, patron of the Jacobites, who, causing above two hundred thousand poor Albigenses to be murdered, was, with St. Francis of Assisi, compared to Christ.

3. IMAGE-WORSHIP, &c.

They adore and worship Images, and quite take away

[1] I. Peter, ii., 16.

part of a moral and express Commandment of the first Table of the Decalogue, cutting the fragment in two, to supply the number. And thus, they paint and carve God the Father like a withered decrepid old man; worship and invocate angels, though this is positively forbidden; call the Blessed Virgin Mary Saviouress—nay, Goddess, Queen of Heaven; bid her command her Son. They worshipped the statue of Venus instead of her, not long since at Turin; and they have (as amongst the Pagans) tutelaries for every trade, office, and even for cattle and other brutes—as hogs, horses, geese, chickens; also for diseases for sore eyes, St. Roche; St. Clare, for headache; for the tooth-ache, St. Apollinus; St. Augustine, for sore breasts; St. Ægidius, for pregnant women; Bellinus, for mad dogs; St. Clement, the Mariner's patron; St. Hubert, the hunter's, and for field-sports; Aubin, the fisher's; St. Cecilia, the musician's; Mary Magdalene, the strumpet's; Crispin, the shoemaker's, &c., like the topical and tutelar gods of the heathen. To these, as we noted, they dedicate magnificent Churches, erect altars, shrines, and statues, before which they prostrate, worship, and fall down—invoke incense, and offer candles, lighted at noon-day, and consumptive oblations, masses, waters, vests, stations of indulgences, of lustrations, sprinkling both men and cattle.

To these they make costly processions, in rich copes, banners; adorn their altars with pixes, tabernacles, crosses, censers, make vows as to co-mediators, rely upon their protection. To these they consecrate not only

places, but devote their children, putting them in the fantastical habits of the Capuchin; and think that dying in St. Francis's coat is of great efficacy, and the being girt with the friar's cord.

To these they go in pilgrimage to St. James of Compostella, Notre Dame of Montserrat, of Chartres, and St. Michael, and St. Thomas of Canterbury; to our Lady, under a thousand denominations, *De Vertu, De Grace;* and, above all, to the Shrine and House at Loretto; the fable of whose miraculous translation has acquired immense riches and treasures to that *Diana.* And so has the worship of the Blessed Virgin prevailed, not only beyond any Saint, Angel, or Apostle, but even of our Saviour himself; the Christian religion being now become, in a manner, wholly *Marian,* to whose altars the richest offerings are brought, as among the Pagans were to the shrines of Apollo, at Delphos, Thebes, Ephesus, &c. For these ladies sell pardons and indulgences, and, for money, whatever you would beg of God himself, namely, grace, repentance, and remission of sins. And, therefore, Bellarmine calls them *Redemptores nostri aliquo modo, et Numina;* which latter word we know signifies *Gods;* and on St. Nicholas's day they pray, *Ut ejus meritis et precibus à Gehennæ incendiis liberemur;*[1] so, on the octaves of St. Peter and St. Paul, and the Feast of St. Bonaventura; so that Cassander Cane of that communion says plainly, they come full home to the superstition of the Heathens.

[1] ["That by his merits and prayers we may be delivered from the fires of Hell."]

To these, with subtile wires and neurospastic springs, they give, now and then, various motions of head, and eyes, which they have made to weep; as did that ingenious French monk, who, conducting a vine branch through the wall into the image's head, by a hole bored through the pupil of its eye, and cut at the spring, made abundance of tears to fall, to the great admiration of her devotees, and no less gain and veneration of the convent.

4. WORSHIP OF RELICS.

They worship the reliques and rotten bones of reputed saints, and adore fragments of the supposed material Cross, (which they hold to be inherently holy, and has faculty to take away sins) with the nails, thorns, spear, instruments, of putting our most Blessed Saviour to all that torture, with the same worship they do our Lord himself; though of this wood and these nails there are more than would load many carts with the timber and iron heads of spears. Besides, there are the Virgin's milk, hair, smock, &c.; some of our Blessed Saviour's most precious blood; St. Michael's sweat, when he fought with the Devil; a feather of Gabriel's wing; the paring of St. Edmund's nails; and other relics too abominable to be named.

They attribute to holy water, sufflations, &c., the virtue of cleansing sin and exorcising evil spirits, and consecrate medals, roses, chaplets, scapulas, amulets, and periaptas, as of great efficacy to charm the Devil, and protect from danger. Thus they also use enchantments, conjurations, cursings, of salt, spittle, oil, and

other trash, even in the very Sacraments; christening of bells, sanctifying of candles, swords, branches of palm, children's clouts, swaddling-bands, and what not.

All these, I say, they adore, worship, revere, and pray to, though expressly against the whole tenour, not only of Holy Scripture, but the writings of Clement, Lactantius, Vigilantius, Epiphanius, the Council of Eliberis, the Council of Constance,[1] and Gregory the Great;[2] that of Frankfort and Charles the Great; from the year 300 to the present age.

Irene, the Empress, who restored them, deposed her son, Constantine the Sixth, when she had put out her husband's eyes and children's. Eutropius affirms, she used such cruelty against them, that for eighteen days the sun in the firmament seemed to be darkened at noon-day. Finally, she took Constantine the Fifth's body (her father-in-law) out of his grave; and, burning it publicly, cast his ashes into the sea; because he demolished images. At last, the vengeance of God overtook her; for, being accused of treason, she was condemned and exiled to Lesbos.

But, what is still more deplorable, war and discord were begun among the Princes of Christendom; the whole Western Empire being so divided and weakened by the practice of Pope Gregory the Third, that, revolting against the East, in the reign of Isaurus,[3] and Charles Martel, son of Pepin, advantage was given to the common enemy, the Turk, to invade the Eastern Empire, and this has been the gulf of its direful ruin.

[1] A. D. 765. [2] Epist., c. 9. [3] Anno 732.

And all this for the sake of their images and painted puppets. And by these are the souls of people turned from the Faith, to believe fables, and from their sole dependence on God and Christ to the invocation of the creature; thus changing the plain and simple, spiritual and rational worship, suitable to the Divine Nature, into horrible idolatry, ridiculous pageantry, empty forms, and endless and scandalous superstitions.

5. SHAM MIRACLES.

They pretend to *miracles*, which, being for those who do not believe, they never pretend to show any among Protestants; and yet, supposing they did them, if to establish false doctrine, they were at no hand to be believed; no, though an Angel came down from Heaven: (for we read, that the Arians and other Heretics did great wonders). Their missionaries, indeed, make some proselytes—more to the Virgin Mary than Christ, among the ignorant and dissolute; but Luther, Zuinglius, and Calvin, made more in fifty years, by preaching good doctrine, than all their missions and inquisition have done in a hundred. And this by dint of pure reason, without force or secular interests. So that, if the Roman religion were propagated by miracles, [the Reformed] must be true if without them; which is the far greater miracle.

But, as we see they do no miracles among the Reformed, and such as are inquisitive men, and who would be sure to examine them, without being imposed on; so most of those they pretend to have done elsewhere,

prove impostures. So, for instance, that famous miracle done by the four famous Jacobins at Berne, in Switzerland, who were deservedly burnt for having abused a poor Friar, in whom they made the five stigmata, in imitation of those pretended of St. Francis, to bring their convent into reputation. And this happened before that country was reformed. Innumerable were those pretended to have been done at St. Thomas's Shrine at Canterbury, as now at Loretto and other places, which brings immense riches to them.

6. JUBILEES.

The profit they reap by *jubilees* is infinite, through the flocking and resort of innumerable people of all ages and sexes to Rome, for visiting the seven churches there, to the great enriching not only of those reputed holy places, but the whole city; and, therefore, what was wont to be but once in fifty years, is now shortened to the half of that time. So true it is, that

——— Venalia Romæ
Omnia ———

even the very souls of men; the whole religion being a mere merchandize, where no sin whatever (as may be seen by their Book of Rules, or Tax, of the Chancery) but may be bought off with money; and this is publicly owned. And this produced that exorbitant doctrine of

7. INDULGENCES AND PARDONS.

Indulgences and Pardons, introduced by Pope Boniface the Eighth. And, lest men should neglect them,

because of those tedious journeys to the holy market, Rome, they are to be had anywhere for money. And some were ordered to go about, and preach up the purchase, as in Germany, in 1492. This was in terms so impudently sordid, that Luther, taking offence, was the occasion of undeceiving those poor people, to begin the Reformation, which afterwards ensued, and continues to this hour.

To these follow works, not only in themselves meritorious, as causes efficient, but of supererogation and promerit for others. Of this treasure, the Pope having the key, he may dispense the supervacuous duties of others (who do more than is required for their salvation) to sinners who have no merit of their own. These are openly sold, and are good church-merchandize.

8. PURGATORY.

But none of these do warm the Vatican Kitchen, comparably to the fire of *Purgatory*, (called the Treasury of the Church) being that third place, into which the souls of such venial sinners, as have not done due penance here, and made full satisfaction, are purified in tormenting flames, till made fit for Heaven. To which they cannot yet be admitted, till St. Peter's Vicar, who has the keys, releases them. But the time may be much shortened, by paying a good sum of money. In this place they have four apartments, the lowest of which is Hell; next to that one for venial sins, pardoned as to guilt, not as to sense. Children, dying unbaptized, have another quarter, and suffer only *pœnam*

damni, non sensûs. Besides these, there is a *Limbus Patrum;* out of all which to escape (Hell excepted, whence no redemption), good works, that is, store of money, especially building and endowing monasteries, prayers of the living, and masses, which all cost money, do avail infallibly.

9. MONASTIC ORDERS.

To keep up the reputation of holiness and mortificátion in their Church, whilst the Pope and his Cardinals and creatures enjoy the riches and dignities of the world, they have divers orders of monks—melancholy, idle, ignorant, and superstitious men, who, whilst they have all things abounding in most of their convents, go wandering about, some of them, in fantastic habits, making a great show of austerity, while they live idly upon the sweat and labour of poor people. Of these some few are eremites, anchorites; others, begging friars, lazy and illiterate, pretending to be of Divine institution, from the example of Elias, St. John the Baptist, &c., though, in truth, but the corrupted imitation of those poor Christians, who were compelled to abandon their countries, and live in deserts, to avoid the persecution and barbarous invasions of the Goths and Vandals. These, some of them, flying into Egypt and other solitudes, working for their livings, and meeting for the service of God, as they had opportunity, without domestic incumbrances by reason of the present distress,—gathered afterwards into communities, and, living very devout and innocent lives, invited many to

join with them, but without those vows of celibacy and other impositions and rules full of superstition,—challenging exemption from all secular jurisdiction, while devouring the labours of others,—so as some whole countries, especially Spain, filled with these drones, are almost become desert of industrious men. Whereas, the first eremites were most of them honest laymen, who took pains for their livelihood, eat sparingly, gave what they earned and could get for the poor, did not beg from house to house, did not tempt God by vows of obedience, poverty, continence, which they had no ability to keep, and were clad like other men, living in poor cottages, not in stately, superb, and richly endowed edifices, more like princes' palaces than cells of mortified monks.

Virgins, also, living chastely and recluse, did not oblige themselves by vows, without their parents' consent, and wives without their husbands', as since they have. Nor were they cloistered in monasteries, nor changed their names as now, calling their order a second baptism, and the way of perfection, filled with pride, vain-glory, and singularity; but, all this while, so many more sworn subjects to the Pope, owning no jurisdiction to those princes under whose jurisdiction they were born.

Young boys, made friars, affected to be called fathers, to the great dishonour and neglect of the venerable Bishop and Priests, as acknowledging themselves under no visitor, save the Pope alone.

That which at first was recommended to those only

who could receive it, and in times (as we said) of persecution and unsettlement, was enjoined by Popes to all persons who would enter into orders; which exposed them to temptations and secret lusts. Whereas, St. Paul, who tells us that marriage is honourable in all men, makes it the character of a Bishop to have educated his children, and not to abandon their wives; whilst these, contemning the Ordinances of God, allow and magnify concubinage before it; by which unheard-of tragedies and libidinous commerce have been acted between nuns and friars, as at Padua, Venice, in Spain, Naples, and especially in France of late, as appears from the public fact and trials, upon inspection of the Convent of Provence, the amorous letters, histories, and novels in everybody's hands, where the lubricity and incontinency are set forth, to the shame of the devotees.

Parents compel their children of both sexes to take the habits and profess against their consent, and before they are at all acquainted with their own strength. To support which, they allowed courtezans rather than marriage, by which monkery is exalted as a state of greater perfection; marriage, in the mean time, which God has sanctified by His own ordinance, and whence all blessings come, is called and esteemed by them impure. Whereas, there is nothing more slovenly and impure than their orders. What pride and contention was there for pre-eminence in the time of Sextus the Fourth! and among the Franciscans concerning their fool's cap, in a process long maintained by a chargeable and bloody suit! So that in a New Testament in the

vulgar Latin, printed in Venice by *Tribantius Paganus*, in the year 1544, the frontispiece represents the Devil clad in a friar's frock, taking our Blessed Saviour by the hand to tempt Him.[1]

Other orders have they of *Flagellators*, especially in pompous public processions, for the more solemness of it; and sometimes porters and wretched men are hired to whip themselves upon these occasions, a spectacle plainly barbarous and Pagan-like.

PART II.

1. ERRONEOUS DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

Original Sin they affirm to be in the flesh only, not in the soul or will.

That the Blessed Virgin was immaculate and without sin.

That some actual sins are, of their own nature, venial; and that even an unregenerate man by his own strength may perform divers good works, and co-operate with the grace of God. They affirm that the good works of just men are absolutely just, and may fulfil the entire law, and that even an unregenerate person

[1] Consult St. Jerome, (*Epist. ad Rust.*) where speaking of certain monks—"Quosdam ineptos homines, Monachos dæmoniorum contra se pugnantium portenta confingere, ut apud imperitos et vulgi homines miraculum sui faciant, et exinde lucra sectentur." . . . . "Sunt (says he) qui humore cellarum immoderatisque jejuniis, tædio solitudinis, et nimiâ lectione, vertuntur in melancholiam. Sunt qui ciliis vestiuntur, et cucullis fabrifactis, ut ad infantiam redeant: imitantur noctuas et bubones," &c. What can more exactly characterize this sort of men?—who more condemn them?

may merit the grace of Justification, *ex congruo*, by good works; and that they who are justified by infusion of inherent righteousness merit *ex condigno*.

That good works are meritorious and efficient causes; that fasting and alms satisfy and merit, and that it may be given of ill-gotten goods.

They say, that the elect may finally and totally fall away from grace; and that sins and works foreseen are the cause of God's absolute decrees.

That grace is conferred by Sacraments *ex opere operato*[1].

That women and laymen may baptize, and that oil, spittle, and salt are necessary ingredients in that rite, and that infants dying unbaptized are damned,—that baptism does totally *abolish* original sin,—that witnesses of baptism may not intermarry without a dispensation.

They affirm, that our Blessed Saviour's sufferings merited for himself.

That faith may subsist, void of charity.

That contrition is the cause of remission, and that attrition without contrition is sufficient, and they make unheard-of distinctions, from doctrines they call *probable*, that is, if held by any of their late doctors, who have in their casuistical treatises or practice favoured any sin, be it ever so impious, as murder, incest, adultery, parricide, perjury, sacrilege, theft—those, guilty of any of these sins, may be absolved after confession; discharging men from the most facinorous crimes both to God and man, without all sense of virtue.

[1] [i.e. Independent of the state of mind of the recipient.]

They hold *Equivocation* lawful, and that no faith is to be kept with heretics. *Fidem hæreticis datam, servandam non esse, et posse concilium eos punire,* &c.

That kings and superior magistrates may be excommunicated, killed, and destroyed, (if not of their religion) and their dominion given away to whom the Pope pleases, and he may discharge subjects from their allegiance.

They hold, that the Catholic Church was not only always visible, but its marks to be universality, continuance, succession, unity in doctrine, miracles, temporal felicity, &c.

That the repetition of the same prayers, Aves, Paters, Creeds, numbered a thousand times upon beads, though they neither know nor mind what they say, are good and acceptable devotion, with their mystic and enthusiastic theology and rapturous nonsense.

That changing flesh for the most delicious and costly sorts of fish, wines, sweetmeats, and fruits, is a proper fast, and yet that adultery, &c., itself is not so great a sin as the breaking of a fast, or the eating of flesh on Friday.

They use the Scriptures, and make the public Prayers, Liturgies, and Masses in a tongue altogether unknown, and not understood by the common people, totally against the Apostle's doctrine; turning their music (for which they make poor children eunuchs) and all their other services and ceremonies into theatricals; with light and superstitious gestures, no wise becoming the gravity of God's solemn worship. Their altars and

churches are full of statues and paintings of naked figures, in scandalous and light postures, so that, to behold their decorations and liberty in that kind, one would rather think it many times a Temple of Venus than a Church of Christ.

2. FALSE SACRAMENTS.

That matrimony is a Sacrament, but prohibited to priests; and early it was so, (as St. Paul predicted[1]) and as zealously did the *Greek Church* protest against it as a tyranny. Then Pope Silvester, in a Council at Nice, approved it, and forbade it again. Then Leo maintained it. Pelagius forbade it again; and Gelasius asserts it. Hilderic, Bishop of Strasburgh, opposed the prohibition, and wrote against the Pope about it. And so, the Council of Tours ordered, that a bishop might have his wife. But when afterwards a canon of Mantua, being accused at Rome for having had several children by his wife, and appearing to the process, this remedy was found to protect him from the censure, by proving she was but his mistress, and not his wife, and all her children bastards. Upon which the Pope allowed of it, and dismissed him with his benediction.

Another Sacrament is

Penance, and faith no part of it.

Confession, auricular to a priest, is another Sacrament, and necessary to salvation; and the penitent is absolved, before any part of the penance or reformation be performed, and then oftentimes most ridiculous penances

[1] I. Tim. iv. 3.

are enjoined. They take also confessions from persons utterly unknown, enjoining the relation of all circumstances, be they ever so indecent and shameful; and this to young priests, who pretend to continence, and should avoid temptations and speculative follies. Particulars of this nature may be seen in their Book of Cases, most abominable to be related. They hold, likewise, that for the most horrid sins contrition is not necessary to repentance; and that passing this form once in the year at a set time, the most notorious sinner is as clear as if he had never offended, to the wonderful encouragement of wicked sinners, and very grateful to the voluptuous.

Confession to some grave and holy man, both for direction and absolution, may be of effect to the pacifying of a disturbed and unresolved conscience, but was never imposed upon Christians as an article of faith or Sacrament; the original of it being for the receiving of some poor Christians, who having been prevailed on by the Gentiles, (and to avoid persecution) to sacrifice, and offer incense to their idols, were so afflicted in conscience, that they could have no peace, till they had acknowledged their fault to the bishops, and received their counsel and comfort, upon their hearty repentance. This growing a burden to the bishop, by reason of the multitude of the people flocking to him, he ordered that they should go to some of the priests, and relate their cases to them. But in time a great scandal having occurred in the very church at Constantinople, *Auricular Confession* (as since called) was quite abo-

lished by Nectarius, their patriarch, in the reign of the Emperors Valens and Theodosius. Yet, for many and great politic ends, it was kept up at Rome, as that by which they dive into all the secrets and interests both of persons, and families, of princes, states, and particular persons. And useful it is for the doctrine of mortal and venial sins, (as they distinguish them) and that of satisfaction.

In the mean time, it is horrid to consider, that young and healthful virgins and wives should be made, on pain of damnation, to reveal all intimacies and circumstances of their thoughts and actions to young friars, and a great temptation and gratification to the curiosity of a lazy sort of men.

Order is another Sacrament, and so is

Extreme Unction, which they pretend is available for the doing away of remaining sins.

3. TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

But, above all, most prodigious and absurd are the opinions touching the Blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in which they affirm the body and blood of our Blessed Saviour to be transubstantiated; namely, that the body of our Lord, blood, bones, soul, and divinity itself, is in all its natural dimensions and parts reduced to an atom, wherein yet it exists in its length, breadth, thickness, without taking up either place or space; and, though it retains the accident of colour, taste, touch, smell, and shape, yet they inhere in no subject, so that Christ (God blessed for ever!) devoured Him-

self, and brake it, and shed His blood, before He was crucified! that sacrifice is made and offered without destruction of the oblation; that it is sufficient to communicate in *one* kind, notwithstanding the Lord's express institution, that all should drink of the cup, as well as eat of the bread.

That the elements are to be adored, and water mixed with the wine.

That the priest is only concerned to receive alone.

That it is a propitiatory sacrifice for the dead as well as for the living, every mass, and this blessed body and blood of our Saviour in a million of places at the same time.

4. THAT THE INTENTION OF THE PRIEST CONSECRATING IS NECESSARY.

And, after all this, both as to this and other Sacraments, the intention of the priest consecrating, baptizing, or conferring any of the rest, is absolutely necessary; so that, if he do not mind or intend what he is doing, there follows no baptism or consecration of the elements; and consequently, if the priest happen to be either Jew or Infidel, (as many such have been) the infant is still a Heathen, and the participants of the Holy Eucharist bread-worshippers and gross idolaters, by their own confession.

5. DENIAL OF THE CUP TO THE LAITY.

As to the taking away the cup from the people, hear the bold words of the Council of Constance, a thousand

years after its institution.[1] A Christian, by the definition of this Council, may be a heretic for adhering to the institution of our Lord Christ, in the very matter of the Sacrament, as Bishop Laud well observes.

6. DEIFICATION OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

To that height of veneration is that of the Blessed Virgin amongst them, that, not content with their own eulogies, they have turned the whole Psalms of David, so as to make the Blessed Virgin a Deity; as, wherever the name of Lord or God is in the whole Psalter, there it is changed into the name of Mary or our Lady, throughout, and this is called the *Psalter of Bonaventura.* In like manner, they have dealt with the *Te Deum,* and other sacred hymns; and introducing their

[1] Licèt Christus, post cœnam, instituerit, et suis discipulis administraverit sub utrâque specie panis et vini hoc venerabile Sacramentum, Tamen hôc non obstante non debet confici post cœnam, nec recipi nisi à jejunis. Et similiter, quod licet in primitivâ Ecclesiâ Sacramenta reciperentur sub utrâque specie à fidelibus, tamen hæc consuetudo, ut à laicis sub specie panis tantùm suscipiatur, habenda est pro legè, quam non licet reprobare; et asserere hanc esse illicitam est erroneum; et pertinaciter asserentes, sunt arcendi tanquam hæretici.

"Altho' Christ instituted this venerable Sacrament after supper, and gave it in both kinds to his disciples, yet, notwithstanding, we ought not to celebrate it after a meal, nor receive it except fasting. In like manner also, though in the primitive Church the faithful received it in both kinds, yet this custom of withholding the cup from the laity is to be reckoned as a law, which we may not gainsay. To assert it to be unlawful is to fall into error; and those who persist in this error are to be expelled as heretics."

critical and scholastic Theology, supposititious Epistles, Decretals, their Canonists, Casuists, Legendaries, &c., chimerical donations of Constantine, to support their novelties with their false versions, citations, and other disingenuous practices notoriously known.

PART III.

1. THE PAPACY.

Now, the source of all these corruptions has been that great fable of Christendom, the

POPE,

or Bishop of Rome, the pretended Successor to St. Peter, and Vicar upon Earth, Head of the Universal Christian Church; that he never did or can err, being the Infallible Judge of all Controversies whatsoever; and can dispense with vows, oaths, contracts, incestuous mixture, and even with the Laws of God, in all cases. Nay, that though he were a heretic or magician (as many of them have been), or ever so notoriously wicked; (such as was John the Twenty-second, deprehended in adultery; such as Alexander the Sixth, and Sextus the Fourth, Pius the Third, Julio the Second, Boniface, Silvester, &c., who worshipped the Devil, committed incest, proudly trod on an Emperor's neck, made Kings their lacqueys,) yet he cannot be the author of any false doctrine. That by his sole authority he has a spiritual co-active jurisdiction, obliging the conscience.

That his commission is immediate and by Divine right from Heaven; the rest of the Bishops but from him.[1]

That he has faculty to depose Kings, and to transfer their dominions.

Saints are canonized by him—some who never were in being, and none without vast sums of money: *Papa tunc quodammodo cogebatur ad canonizandum contra suam opinionem, et propterà protestabatur, &c.*, the Pope, being convinced of the fraud, has sainted some, who never were, says their ceremonial.[2]

He can not only pardon sins, but release from purgatory.

That he only has a right to summon General Councils, without the Emperor's consent, and in which he alone is Judge: and that particular Synods, called and confirmed by him, cannot err.

That all Scriptures are to be interpreted by him.

In a word, that he is the Supreme and Paramount Potentate of the Earth, Judge of all, but not to be judged or censured by any.

To this prodigious height of pride the Popes arrived, from the time of Phocas, who, affecting the empire, murdered his master Mauritius, cut off his wife's head, and Theodora, Tiberis, and Constantia, three of her children. During which confusions, the Pope usurped the Exarchate of Italy, and made himself a Prince so formidable, that Justinian, the Emperor, first kissed his feet. As Bishop of Rome, which was the metropolis of that empire, he had, indeed, precedency of place (not

[1] Bellarmine, de Rom. Pontif., l. 4, c. 22, 24. [2] L. 1, c. 2, sect. 6.

from any Divine institution), above the other Bishops in the Western Church. Advanced by the gift of Charlemagne and Pepin, he was to govern the Church only by the canons of the ancient councils and their decrees, not by his own, as now they do; whilst it is well known that the Councils of Constance and Basil (truly ecumenical) decreed a synod superior to him.

They formerly acknowledged a Pope might and did sometimes foully err in matters of fact, depending on man's testimony, or as a private Doctor in question of right, as of faith and manners, and by himself and particular councils in dubious matters; but not when decreeing in a general. But, though even this last were more than he could rightly challenge, yet are all these limitations now utterly abolished.

Whilst they pretend the guidance and determination of the Holy Spirit, they intrigue about elections by all the arts of policy, simony, and canvassing for suffrages; interposing the interest of secular princes, so that sometimes (as is known) sorcerers, magicians, incestuous, voluptuous men, infidels, and bloody tyrants have, by their own confession, been made the Vicars of Christ, supporting their worldly authority by cruel wars, massacres, implacable persecutions, and devilish machinations. Witness the Eve of St. Bartholomew at Paris, the hellish Powder Conspiracy, the butchery in Ireland, and what the Jesuits, their creatures, have wrought of confusion in Hungary, France, Piedmont, and wherever else they have been entertained; not to recite what their own Bishop Casas has related of their

inhuman cruelty in the West Indies, and their Histories of the Inquisition every day acquaint us with, beyond any thing which we read of among the most truculent Pagans.

As to the preaching of the wholesome word of God, it is now more than nine hundred years since scarcely one of them has appeared in the pulpit; and, though there be among them innumerable swarms of priests, monks, and friars, there are but few labourers, but such as fleece the flock, and feed them with false doctrine. Of these, some (as we have shown) do manifestly lead to an evil life, as that of *Attrition*, which is a low and imperfect sorrow for sin, though but on temporal hopes, fears, desires, which (say they) is a sufficient disposition to receive priestly absolution, and justifies before God.

The Popes, dispensing with oaths and the obedience of children to their parents, subjects to their Princes, &c., no faith with heretics, equivocation, the doctrine of adoring the Host for the Incarnate Jesus, worshipping images, purgatory, indulgences, infallibility, allowance of stews and courtezans, forbidding marriage as pollution, with all the rest we have enumerated, and many dangerous ones besides, were not so much as thought of during the first five hundred years after Christ, or to be found in the catalogue of any ancient Father.[1] Nor find we any branded for not holding those Articles, which the Reformed Churches reject, in

[1] Such as Epiphanius, Minutius Felix, Augustine, and other holy men.

their symbols and other treatises.[1] Take them altogether, there is not one Article of Faith, received by the Church of Rome at present, rejected by the Reformed, so much as mentioned even, much less controverted. And, when any of them before were, they were but as speculative points, undetermined, till that spurious Synod of Trent, when a few Bishops, such as they were (out of forty-eight, above twenty of Italian, made in a day or two, to serve a turn), and five Cardinals, representing the Universal Church, determined the great points of that assembly, without so much as hearing what could have been and was objected. For all things had been beforehand resolved upon at Rome, and His Holiness's pacquet was weekly brought, which directed what they were to carry.

It is notoriously known, that the French Church was for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in both kinds and service, in a known tongue; and that the Spanish was kept, by apparent violence, from daring to reform. No protestants were summoned or admitted to come thither, nor the Bishops of many great nations and kingdoms, both of the western and eastern Churches; no, nor one of the four Patriarchs appearing at the Assembly, though sitting so many years, or at all approving what they did. But so was this pretended

[1] Such as Irenæus' Unity of Faith (lib. i., c. 2); Origen's Introduction De Primariis; Tertullian Reg. Fidei; the conclusion of Epiphanius' Work, which he styles The Settlement of Truth and Assurance of Immortality; or, in later times, that Treatise of Gennadius, not above two centuries since, De rectâ Christianorum Fide.

Council managed, (all Christendom calling for the reformation of innumerable corruptions) that, instead of doing any thing towards it, there were no less than eleven new Articles added to their Creed, and these shut up with the anathema of Athanasius's symbol; which, whosoever did not believe, were *ipso facto* accursed, and deprived of salvation, by the most unheard of impudence, as their own more impartial and honest historians have recorded, beyond all contradiction.

By these and the like politics do the Bishops of this Holy See maintain their height, strengthening their dominion over the souls and bodies of Christians by laws of terror, which they first obtained of secular Princes by craft and violence. Nor could anything satisfy their severity against such as usurped their decrees, as if they had rebelled against God himself by blasphemy. For this they instituted the *Inquisition* with the most illimited power to examine upon oath whom they pleased, and under whose obedience soever. By this they insinuated and wound themselves into all the secrets and cabinets of Princes, and private persons' intrigues and concerns; and for this effect committed them to the most exquisite tortures and cruellest death, their accusers being not so much as known, nor the accused permitted to hear or refute witnesses.

And now, after all this, it would (as a learned Prelate[1] of our own suggests) make a suspicious man a little inquisitive into the particular doctrines of a Church, in which he finds that Indulgences, Jubilees,

[1] Dr. Jeremy Taylor.

Purgatory, Masses, and offices for the dead, are very profitable knacks; that the doctrine of the Primacy, Infallibility, superiority over Councils, of indirect power in temporals, the dignities and revenues of Cardinals and Pope's nephews are great instruments and temptations of secular honour. Whereas, if she should learn to lay down her grandeur at the foot of the crucifix, and really despise the world, and prefer Jerusalem before Rome, and Heaven above the Vatican, these opinions would not have in them any native strength, to support them against the perpetual assaults of those who speak so much reason and Scripture against them. So that, were it not for the Inquisition of Spain and the persecution in France, all Europe would soon reject the error, tyranny, and monstrous ignorance, and superstition they live under, without any Christian liberty of using their common sense and reason.

These things being so, how plainly evident it is that the Christian orthodox religion, described in the former chapter, was by institution a profession so contrary to these, and especially to what we have produced in this last, of the present Papal (which seems to be a complex of all the rest) that nothing can be more unlike; as consisting in the doctrines of the greatest simplicity imaginable, till first some of the Jews and other proud and ambitious men, and those (as we have said) for the most part of Churchmen, striving, *de summis sedibus*, began to turn it into an art. The consequences of which were the disputing of sublime and high mysteries and speculative researches, scholastical and unin-

telligible terms and distinctions, which rendered plain passages so intricate and perplexed, that the people were confounded, running from the Word of God, the plain and easy rules of Christian precepts, to those who hid and kept them from the Fountain of Truth, that they might advance their own reputation, designs, and interests, by nourishing them in ignorance and busy superstitions.

Thus was the pure religion miserably corrupted during eight or nine hundred years; all that blessed union which the Gospel came to establish broken and crumbled into sects and irreconcilable parties; placing the sincere faith in a multitude of ceremonies, rites, will-worship, and bodily exercises—eating out the vitals and spirit of religion; so that rare it was to find any true and sincere professors amongst those who bear the name of Christians. Hence wars, bloodshed, divisions, rebellion, heresies, sectaries, and enthusiasts, and many who were Atheists and libertines, turning the Grace of God into wantonness; yet all pretending their title from Holy Scripture, which holds forth nothing but peace, love, unity, meekness, loyalty, temperance—doctrines, diametrically opposite to what they practised, and were delivered by Christ and His Apostles. And this was so plain, that the meanest, simple people, poor women and illiterate persons, understood their duty. Nor yet lost it the majesty and reverence due to its Divine Original, nor its efficacy upon the most considerable; for it subdued the Roman Empire, the great and learned men were converted; and yet all the art they had to recommend and plant it, was by Scripture,

sermons, and plain discourses; so that now we must have either changed our religion (whilst we depart from their doctrine), or we are exceedingly mistaken in our methods of inquiring after it.

This I have endeavoured to do, in a brief recension of the most famous and dangerous heresies, heresiarchs, and dissenters from the true Catholic, Christian, and Primitive Religion; it being, indeed, sufficient only to have named some of them, to confute them, if applied to the Scripture, (which we have, upon reasons invincible, established, and acknowledge to be the genuine and only Rule of Faith,) by showing how widely they differ and prevaricate from the wholesome precepts and doctrine delivered from those Holy Oracles, the Word of Life and Pillar of Truth, constantly maintained and professed in the purest ages of the Church.

CONCLUSION.

Now, then, we make haste to show what, (after all these pretences, and all that has been said before in this Treatise), upon the utmost and most impartial inquiry, may appear, to unprejudiced men, the most defecate, sincere, safe, and orthodox Christian profession, both for doctrine and discipline; which will be the subject of the following and conclusive Chapter of this present Work. Not that, in the mean time, we dare affirm that all those we have put down in the catalogue of heretics and dissenters, or which are presumed to be so by Philastrius, Epiphanius, St. Augustine, and others, much less by the Popish Writers, or that deflect from

the purity of the Christian Faith, are all alike heretics. For instance, the necessity of *Pædobaptism* was not always so peremptorily determined, till about the eighth century; and therefore we should judge charitably, so long as the Ordinance be not despised. Many of the blessed Martyrs themselves suffered for the Faith, without it. Nor was Valentinian, the Emperor, baptized, whom St. Ambrose so highly celebrates. They all desired it, but were prevented. The doctrine of the Millennium was not condemned for heresy, though justly rejected; whilst the Donatists were, for their uncharity, condemning everybody but themselves, and denying communion to all who were not of their party; whereas, the zealous author of their opinions, not proscribing others, was still accounted Catholic.

It is one thing, (as our learned Boxhall says),[1] to communicate with material idolaters, heretics, and schismatics in their idolatry, heresy, and schism, (which is altogether unlawful), and another to communicate in pious offices and religious duties, which may, in some cases, be very lawful. For so the Orthodox Christians sometimes did with the heretical Arians, and the primitive Catholics with the schismatical Navatians. The Catholics called the Donatists brethren, though the Donatists were not so charitable to them.

Particular Churches may fall into errors, while all errors are not essential fundamentals, and such destroy not the being of a Church, though one ought to preserve himself from those errors. The foundation may

[1] See Reply to S. W. Refutation, &c., sect. 27.

be good, when the superstructure is but straw and stubble.

A true Church and a true Religion may have great corruptions and errors in it, yea, and that in matters of faith—such was that of the Church of Corinth, which was a true Church, and had a true Religion, though there were strange differences and opinions amongst them; as, whether the Mosaic Law was still obligatory, and about Circumcision; which were matters of faith. So that an error in fundamentals, not known to be an error, is not a damning error, though it excuse not. For heresy is an error in the will, not in the understanding; such as was that of denying Christ to be come in the flesh, the impure Nicolaitans, Gnostics, &c., so as a bad and vicious habit, drunkenness, fornication, and such wasting sins are worse than a false opinion.

Now, though this or that may seem to one to be the most consentaneous and agreeable to Scripture and antiquity; yet we ought to be in perfect charity with Christians of all professions, whose doctrines are not positively against the Revealed Word, and rightly informed reason, and with every individual person of some heterodox opinions, who are born (as it were) and educated in the opinion, and remain invincibly ignorant of better light, yet living sincerely; and that in what they do rightly, we may communicate with them, and intentionally should. Nay, even on the very Heathen, who never had the means, we are not to pass judgment; but to pity and pray for them, leaving them to a merciful God, and have much more favourable thoughts of their

condition and future state, (provided they live virtuously and morally), than of wicked, profligate, malicious, and profane persons, who go under the name, and wear the badge, of Christian.

Heresy, then, is not *every* difference of opinion. The word, in Scripture, is used in a different sense. Those who were meant of the worst, were openly called *Antichrists*, Pseudo-prophets; and such as broached impious opinions in practical matters, as those already named.

Nor may we here exempt the Papists, who adhere to those damnable doctrines of equivocation, idolizing saints and reliques, deposing princes, forbidding marriage, selling pardons, works of supererogation, and *Trent* additions. And who think all damned, who embrace not all their fopperies and superstitions, whereof some are as gross as any among the Pagans. To these let us, then, say, as St. Augustine,[1] of some of the Donatists: "Let them show, if they can, their Church not in discourse of noise and words, not in their councils, writings, and disputes, not in false and pretended miracles, against which our Blessed Saviour (foreseeing what would come to pass) has forewarned us; but let them show these things in the Law or Prophets, the Psalms, the Evangelists, or any of the Canonical Scriptures;" or to which, we add, the first General Councils.

In the mean time, none among Christians were persecuted for their bare opinions, during the first three hundred years after Christ, who came to plant the Gospel of Peace and charity; nor ought those to be, whose

[1] De Unitate Eccles., c. 18.

lives are innocent, though doctrine erroneous: since their error is to be accounted their misery, rather than their crime. And it is possible one may maintain an opinion damnable in itself, though not so to him who is ignorant of its malignity, and is (as we said) led into it invincibly. But then, indeed, his opinion shall burn, and the rubbish it was erected on, according to the Apostle.[1]

The mischief of the Church does not proceed from this, that men are not all of one mind, (which is impossible) but that every opinion is an Article of Faith, and every Article the ground of a bloody quarrel, and every quarrel of a faction.[2] While a holy and pious life will render our belief holy, if we consult not interest in our choice, but search the Truth, without other design than the getting to Heaven; and then, to be as careful to preserve charity, as we were to get a point of Faith, which, if true, is kept with the least trouble of any grace.

As to *schism* and *separation*, they are also different things; for, though no *schism* be without *separation*, there may be *separation* without *schism*; as, when it is made an occasion of some essential error. Such separation is not from the Church, but from the errors of some in the Church; taking *Church* for the external profession of it, not for the orthodox and veritable doctrine:[3] but of this in the following Chapter.

In like manner, uncharitable dissensions of particulars

[1] I. Cor., iii., 12-15. [2] Bp. Taylor.
[3] See Greg. Nazianz. Orat. 12.

are not imputable to the universal community of Orthodox Churches, whose harmony and consent in necessary points are to be estimated only by their public confessions. Thus, there are differences of doctrines and disciplines even among the Papists themselves, (who so much boast of union), as that the Pope may err; that a General Council is above him; that Ecclesiastical authority is immediately in the Prelates. They differ also about the Decrees of God, about the Scripture Canons, about Original Sin, Good Works, and several other tenets.[1]

In the mean while, unhappy and deplorable it is, that Christians are broken into so many fragments, and religion called by so many appellations of *Popish, Socinian, Anabaptist, Lutheran, Calvinian, Presbyterian, Independent,* &c. By which art Satan keeps up the faction, whilst in some there may be no considerable error as to doctrine and essential truth.

To conclude this Chapter, then, and at once give answer to the several pretenders and candidates of the Truth, and show what really it is we have been thus long contending for.

The True Religion is that which is most *ancient* and most *Catholic,* decent, simple, devout, void of novelty, singularity, and superstition. And, since nothing can add to or improve it, without a new Revelation, not of any Angel, (though from Heaven) but of God himself, there can be nothing new, no new light or sect, or which needs to support it, any trick; nothing incon-

[1] See Brenwood's Enquiry.

sistent with Government, or which confines it to a party, or that consists in scrupulous and impertinent niceties, censoriousness, rebellion, negligence; or whose religion and devotions are made up of pompous pageantry, processions, bloody flagellations, hair shirts, lousy, nasty rags, frocks, dead and dry bones, reliques, images, crosses, lustration, sufflation, conjuration, exorcisms, rosaries, beads, chaplets, agnuses, consecrated palms, scapulas, amulets, censings, blessed candles, sprinklings, oil and spittle, and such like trash, murmuring of *paters*, repetitions, antic postures, cringes, shaved crowns, disguising the countenance, artificial looks, pretended miracles, raptures, and transport, mouthing and barbarous tones, indulgences, pardons, rebellious principles, probable doctrine, new creeds, legends, unsound traditions, works of supererogation; nor, on the other side, in mere faith without works, to be a separate party.

But the True Religion is that which is but one; and such is that which Christ our Lord instituted, and such as was agreeable to all times, places, persons, and conditions; consisting of sound doctrine, sober reason, sincere piety, holiness and charity, self-denial, chastity, obedience to superiors, and of those seven characters of union, enumerated by the Apostle,[1] made up of one body, one spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of All, who is above all, and through all, and in all. In a word, then,—consider what the same Apostle exhorts us to: try all things; hold fast that which is good. For from

[1] Ephes., iv., 4.

every sect and community of Christians something may be learned. For some may have a better confession; some, a better discipline; a third, fewer errors; and, by whatever instrument a holy life is advanced, to use and choose it, though we grind our spears at the Philistine's forge; considering that, as to the one thing needful, we have no master but Christ, no religion but Christian, no rule but Scripture, no law but right reason.

CHAPTER XII.

OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, REFORMED FROM ITS CORRUPTIONS, AND RESTORED TO ITS PRIMITIVE PURITY, ESPECIALLY IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

We have hitherto shown the rise and progress of those errors, which have to this time, and still continue to break, crumble, obscure, hide, and pervert the truth, which we are all this time enquiring after; and by the dates of their nativity, tenets and principles, factions, interests, and arts, the Christian doctrine has been corrupted, and the discipline perverted by that old enemy of mankind working upon the passions and infirmities of men in all ages, manifestly repugnant both to Scripture, (which we have abundantly proved to be the oracles of God, and the only rule of faith) right reason, primeval antiquity, and solid argument.

We now therefore proceed to the last part of our undertaking, to show the reasons we have to reject, either totally or in part, all the foregoing religions, sects, and heresies, as gross and manifest decadences from the truly orthodox and Catholic; which, after all, we find to be the present CHURCH OF ENGLAND, the most purged, refined, and reformed, from whatever is spurious or drossy, or so much as even is rationally doubtful in the rest. Not yet pretending (as we have professed) altogether to condemn all, who through ig-

norance, infirmity, education, want of protection, and other unavoidable innocent prejudice, do not fully come up to her in every point of doctrine and discipline, or vary in things indifferent and not fundamental. They all stand or fall to their own masters, and many holy and excellent persons God has dispersed, as wheat among the tares and zizany, namely, such as cleave to all the saving truths of His Holy Gospel, who live humbly, charitably, innocently, justly, and devoutly; whilst there is one yet more choice and select assembly, which, from its true and apostolic antiquity, universality, purity, decency, and even visibility, we make choice of and may safely rely upon, (invoking the God of all truth to direct us in the search of that precious pearl, for the purchase of which the wise merchant parted with all he had) namely, the true Christian and Evangelical religion, vindicated from all imposture, and, upon due and impartial examination, bringing her to the test of God's holy and only infallible Word, and separating the ore from the dross.

And this we shall do, by first showing what is meant by the Church Catholic, her fundamental Faith, Creed, Confession, Worship, Sacraments; in a word, Doctrine and Discipline, confronted with the purest ages and Catholic Professors of the Church, before it was corrupted, and how, according to these characters, the happily reformed religion, as by law established and professed in the Church of England, is, by God's distinguishing and especial grace, the most apostolical and orthodox Christian Church, now extant in the world;

and that it is both lawful and necessary to purge and reform, when either corrupt in manners or doctrine, the Church of Christ; as it had, before His coming, power, so has it since, by the best examples of former times, Judæa reforming upon the wicked policy of Jeroboam, though Israel would not consent to join her.

Now, that the Church was in this sad and deplorable condition, all that we have produced in the former Chapter manifestly shows. Let us hear what even our adversaries themselves have owned and complained of. *Cùm infiniti abusus, schismatæ quoque et hæreses per totum hunc orbem invalescant, Ecclesiam Dei legitimâ indigere reformatione, nemini non apertum erit,* said Peter de Aliaco,[1] Card. Cameracensis, no less than three score years ere Luther was born. And the honest Cassander, speaking of the bishops of Rome—*Utinam illi, à quibus hæc reformatio accipienda esset, non ipsi harum superstitionum auctores essent, vel certè eas in animis hominum simplicium aliquando quæstûs causâ nutrirent.*[2]

SECTION I.

DEFINITION OF CHURCH CATHOLIC.

1. CHURCH.

Now, then, as to what is meant by the Church, (taken extensively) the name was first to signify the whole

[1] Lib. De Reform. "Since numberless abuses, schisms too and heresies, prevail everywhere, it is plain that the Church of God needs to be lawfully reformed."

[2] Cassander, Art. 25. "Would that those persons, who ought to undertake this reformation, were not themselves the authors of those superstitions, or, at least, would cease to foster them in the minds of the simple for the sake of gain!"

body of God's people in the Wilderness, when called and assembled together upon their common occasions, as the name denotes

Εκκλησία, or Συναγωγή.

After which time such as resorted to the same government have been so named, and the body of the Christians or new Israel succeeding God's ancient people, succeeded to the name, signified by our Blessed Lord, when He says, "Upon this rock I build my Church,"[1] meaning by it all who bear His name; and so, "Tell it to the Church," that is, to that part of the Church, to which the person can resort most conveniently, since it is not possible he should do it to the whole. They are one religion in point of right, however unhappily divided in point of fact by their own fault. For doubtless the Holy Apostles so founded the churches of their planting, that they might befit the constitution of one whole Universal Church.

In short, the Church is the corporation or body of all those who profess to believe in Jesus Christ to be the true Messiah and Redeemer of the world, albeit this body be divided into never so many sects; but among which there are remaining a considerable part of true and faithful persons, professing in general the same faith, and participating of the same Sacraments, under the ministry of lawful pastors, with that body of believers. I say, however, dispersed and distracted through the world, so that every individual single person, professing the Christian faith, is a member of that

[1] Matt. xvi., 18; xviii., 17.

particular church he lives in, and all those particular churches are members of the Catholic or Universal Church.

Thus, all those baptized persons constituted that first Christian Church, converted by St. Peter and other of the Apostles, and in like manner all other Assemblies, so coming in and united by aggregation, and continuing steadfast in their doctrine and fellowship, that is, of sacraments and prayer, as builded and founded on the same rock, Christ Jesus, though in several apartments like a house standing on the same basis, covered and protected under the same roof.[1] This structure did our Blessed Saviour qualify all His Apostles to raise, as being endued with the like power and authority, (as St. Cyprian[2] tells us, speaking of the origination of the Church only, not at all of the succession.) So St. Peter indeed had the honour to convert the first Christians, to demonstrate the unity of that which was to be superstructed on. And this church, so founded, is to continue in actual being to the consummation of the world; and is, therefore, to receive a constant and perpetual accession, from time to time, till that appointed period. This, as an object of faith, we believe, because it is grounded on God's promise. Not that many particular churches may not fall away, and their candlesticks be removed, but not to an universal defection, or to perish at once. For so again our Blessed Lord: *Lo! I am with you to the end of the world:*[3] And *where two*

[1] Ephes., ii., 19, 20.
[2] De Unitate Eccles.
[3] Matt., xxviii., 20.

or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.[1]

Thus, as this church must be a holy and pure church, so will it always be visible, if not generally, yet in some particulars. The Greek Church has ever taught the foundation through all the changes, confusions, and interruptions it has suffered. It is true, it may sometimes be clouded, as a castle upon the most eminent mountain, by a transient mist, when yet the fabric remains as conspicuous as to its solidity and capacity of being a visible object, as to matter and form, as in the most serene weather. There was even in the Church of Rome still the matter, but not the form, of a visible church. Now, it is not the matter, but the form (we know) that gives the *esse* and being to things. The persons are the matter who compose the Church, and they indeed are visible; but it is not that which gives the denomination, without the other. Now, all who profess the Christian religion may be called the matter, and yet be exceedingly wide from being a true church. When the form is visible, it is then, and then only, the true church will be so too. Now, the form consists in faith, godliness, sanctity, and things which do not (of their natures) so evidently appear and make external and pharisaical shows to the eyes of the world, because they are graces hidden in the hearts of believers, and fall not so properly under the criterion of sense.

The external vocation is, indeed, common to all, and the means that God employs, to render her a church,

[1] Matt., xviii., 20.

are sufficiently manifest; but to know whether this or that individual be the true Church, is not discernible by the corporal sight of externals, but by the life and doctrine of its professors. It is not visible as affected to a certain place or city only, as we may see by the description of the Church at Ephesus in the Revelation of St. John,[1] how God dealt with her and with six famous churches more, though founded by the very Apostles themselves. In like sort, we may read how St. Paul menaces the Romans, if they persist not in the faith and abide in the truth, namely, that they shall be exscinded and cut off as unfruitful and unprofitable branches.[2] And therefore their own great Ribera[3] pronounces, that in the end or latter day she shall revolt from the faith once delivered to her, as in effect those prodigious errors both in the present doctrine and worship have already almost totally obscured her pristine beauty. She has indeed a name, *Vox et præterea nihil*, a show without a substance, or, if a substance, foully overgrown with moss, briars, and noisome weeds.

A Church may possibly be, and often is, obscured for a time, when persecution rises by means of the Word. For, where was it visible, when Elias made his sad complaint, after the Ten Tribes had revolted to Baal?[4] or, when Manasseh built up the high places, committing such unheard-of abominations? Where, when they were all in captivity at Babylon, and led away before by Salmanezer? Where, when under the cruelty of

[1] Rev., ii., 1-7.
[2] Rom., xi., 24.
[3] In Apoc., c. 14.
[4] I. Kings, xix., 10.

Antiochus? and all their many dispersions?[1] Nay, where shall be the Christian Church, when all the inhabitants of the earth shall adore the Beast and his image? When was it visible, when almost all were Arians?[2] And Bellarmine[3] himself is forced to confess, that near the time of *Antichrist,* the Church shall suffer under so great persecution, driven to abscond, as hardly to be found in the whole world.

Those who agree in the Christian symbols, believe this invisible to bodily eyes; and Almighty God imparts His Grace in this life, but glory in that to come. Were the Christian Church entirely visible, what needed she to be taught to say in her Creeds, she believes the Holy Catholic Church, and not rather, that she sees it visibly, whilst it is now more an object of faith than of sight; (and so walk by faith, not by sight) for, whilst we believe, we do not see, and when once we begin to see, we shall cease to believe, because there will be no need of it.

From the year 378 to 1428, had the true Christian Church been so miserably clouded, that few, very few could discover where she was, but in the grotts and crypts, such as the *antelucani cœtus;*[4] so that, if visibility be joined with perpetual eminence, the Christian Church has been oft, in a manner, invisible, yet existing in some part or place, in some persons, nay, in

[1] See St. Augustine, Epist. 80.

[2] See St. Athanasius's Epist. ad Sol.

[3] De Roman. Pontif., l. 3, c. 7.

[4] See Arnob. Hexam., l. 4, c. 18.

whole countries, as Berengarius and his disciples in the eleventh century, the Albigenses, the Vaudois, the poor men of Lyons, the Taborists in Bohemia, and others in the succeeding one, and so to Luther, down to our days.

The Church has had its champions and assertors in all ages and times, and is still the same, in respect of internal substance; though eclipsed, many times, of its outward splendour, she may be under shade, not extinguished, no more than the glorious sun under a cloud; so neither can the whole body of the Church be now quite hidden, though the particular members may.

2. CATHOLIC.

Next as to the *Catholic* adjunct—*Christianus mihi nomen, Catholicus cognomen*[1]—"the true Christian, the true *Catholic*," was the old answer; but, as for the term itself, of which some so highly vaunt, it is not so essential, as if the very name made it what it should be. Nor is it more a mark of the true Church, than as it agrees in doctrine; nor find we it in all the Scriptures, nor was it ancient in the Church itself, or so much as in her *symbols*, till after the time of the Apostles, and then only to distinguish the orthodox from the heretics who disturbed her, and affected to be called *Catholic*, as an adulterous Jerusalem would be called the Holy City,[2] upon which occasion it was in frequent use

[1] Pacian, in Bibl. Patr.

[2] St. Augustine, Epist. 48; and Lactantius, Instit., l. v., c. ultim.

amongst the Fathers; some, indeed, of the Apostolic writings and epistles were directed to the Universal or Catholic Church, and others to particular churches. But we are not to look upon it as a part of Scripture, because it formed part of the titles.

The ancient Catholic Church was frequently taken for an ordinary parochial assembly, where all the parish met; and sometimes were particular persons so named, in opposition to heretics and schismatics. And, though these were not properly Catholics, in respect of singularity, yet, in respect of unity with all the rest, they were; and were so called, to signify the whole. And most apparent it is from all the ancients, St. Cyprian, Clemens Alexandrinus, St. Cyril, Isidorus, Prosper, and abundantly in St. Augustine, that by the Catholic Church was only meant the Faithful, and not any other body, or external, pompous, and eminently visible church. In his Treatise on St. John, we shall find it to consist in the assembly of the body of Christ; namely, Saints predestinated, called, justified, glorified; and so was taken by St. Bernard, till the twelfth age; and after, not for the *professors* of the Christian religion, but the Faithful and Holy in it. Wicked men, indeed, may equivocally be said to be of the Church, as ill humours, of the body,[1] and should be cast out, because, though in it, they are no part of it: so our bodies may have a dead and useless member, in which there is no life or vigour.

These things being so, if communion with the Church

[1] St. Augustine, Tract 3, in I. Epist. Joh.

of Rome be only to be in communion of the Catholic Church, as they pretend, (but which, indeed, is false and contradictory in the very term, *Rome* being but a particular Church) what became of all the Asian Churches, the provinces of Cilicia, Mesopotamia, and the rest, for one hundred and fifty years nearly, upon the difference of celebrating Easter? What, of a great part of the Oriental Church, separating from the Roman communion in the sixth century, in the Fifth General Council, against that of Chalcedon? What, of the Churches of Africa, excommunicating Pope Vigilius? What, of several others? Wherefore, evident it is, that every Church's centre of communion was the Holy Man, Bishop and Archbishop appointed head of that diocese or province: thus was Rome head of ten provinces; Milan, of seven; Alexandria, of that of Egypt, Lybia, and Pentopolis; Antioch, of the East; Carthage, of Africa; and so of the rest.

Wherefore, Gregory Nazianzen,[1] writing to the clergy of Cesarea, calls her the Mother of all Churches, and says as much of it, as any can of Rome. This city, the presidence and chief residence of the Imperial Court, where all the grand affairs of that vast dominion were transacted, made it more conspicuous; but, when all this was translated to Constantinople, we see how Rome declined, even as to its former esteem; that rival Bishop, challenging equal, if not superior, privileges; and accordingly does Nazianzen[2] name it the very Eye of the Universe, as deriving its dignity from the fountain of

[1] Epist. 22. [2] Orat. 32.

the Faith; and, doubtless, the centre of communion was the same in all the Apostolic Churches, wherever planted. Whence that of Tertullian, that all who are in the same belief with those Churches, though founded long after, (meaning the five Patriarchal), are of the same Church; so that, when any great and important affair required it, a Council, consisting of all these, was sufficient, without the decision of that of Rome; which, had it been the only centre, we should have many times heard from the best records. But we are, in the mean time, sufficiently satisfied, that the most genuine term is that Church which (as we said) comprehends all persons, dogmas, sexes, ages, and countries, that profess and embrace all the necessary saving truths. And, in this respect, none, who are not of it, can be safe, because he is of no true Church. To depart, then, from such a Church, is highly dangerous; but to reform from it, is highly necessary.

But, to conclude, and draw some inference from all that has been said, as it concerns the title of this Chapter, and especially the Church of England; it is to be considered, that the choice of religion is not a problematical thing; but a certain and real profession, established upon solid and undeniable truths, stripped and divested of all false colours and pretences, novelties and additions, whatsoever. And, therefore, as we have shown the danger and unreasonableness of being of no religion, in this Treatise, either out of direct Atheism, or the fear of being in a false one; so how unsafe it is to be indifferent in our choice, even of the

Christian religion, be the persons professing it ever so learned and zealous. True faith requires more than a good intention; for, unless our principles be right, and the foundation firm, we shall fall into errors and superstition; and he who runs in a wrong path, the more speed he makes, the farther he deviates, and comes short of what he seeks.

There is a great cry made by some for catalogues of fundamentals, but without any cause or necessity; since it is sufficient for any man's salvation, that he assents to the truth of Holy Scripture, carefully endeavouring to understand its meaning, so far as concerns his duty, and to direct his life accordingly. Wherefore, he whose conscience tells him he does so, needs not fear. In the mean time, if needs they will require such a list, let them repair to the doctrines which they find plainly revealed, and such as, according to the various capacities of men's knowledge, become fundamental to them, that is, necessary to be known; for so some may be to them, which are not such to others.

SECTION II.

FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES, OR CREED.

And now, whilst the Romanists call out so loudly for fundamentals, they are themselves forced to distinguish them, as what are essential and universal points, what are other; and are as much concerned as any to know what they are, and produce a catalogue, as any at

whom they clamour; as if God and the Holy Scripture, and even Nature herself, had not afforded light sufficient for a virtuous life. But, since our Blessed Saviour has determined who shall be admitted into His religion, in the Baptismal Covenant,[1] and the Church accepted the Creeds to be the matter of our Christian Profession, we shall need to go no further. Nor does the Church of England require her sons to subscribe to her Articles, as other fundamentals, than as instruments of peace; indulging a modest liberty of interpreting them, and not obtruding them as essential of saving faith, as the pure Word of God in Scripture is; but as pious opinions, fitted for the preservation of Christian unity. As to the rest, she judges that the safest standard, by which to establish and examine any point of doctrine, is to consider which of the opposites most tends to the advancement of real sanctity, and to make choice of that. In the mean time, she endeavours to follow and embrace that which is most consonant to the Word of God, and the most constant belief and practice of the purest and most ancient times; and takes this for demonstration, that nothing can be necessary to be believed, under pain of damnation, save such propositions, of which it is evident that God has declared and taught them to us, and of which it is also as certain, that this is the true and genuine sense and purport of it.

This Faith, then, which the Reformed Church of England does profess, without judging or determining the true Church by what she is called, but by what she

[1] Matt., xxviii., 19, 20.

believes and teaches,[1] is plainly set down in the *Symbol*, commonly called the *Apostles' Creed*, as what the Christian Church of most denominations has constantly professed to believe and teach. Nor yet that the words and syllables of it do contain whatever is necessary to salvation; but because the Creed is not the bare words of the Creed, but the sense and meaning of them, together with that coherence and dependence of the parts, which the reasons and grounds of them infer. Upon this ground, then, the Christian religion, reformed from its corruptions, and restored to primitive purity,

I. 1. Believes in God, since there can be no Divine Faith (as well as no Christian) without believing a God. For faith is, therefore, divine, because it dependeth upon the authority of God giving testimony to its object, and that which has no being can have no authority.

2. That God is one Almighty, Omniscient, Eternal; Creator of the Universe, and of all that it contains.

3. That in the Unity of this Godhead there is a *Trinity* of persons, *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*.

II. That God the Son is the Word, begotten of the Father from all eternity, of one eternal substance with the Father, who descended from Heaven, for our salva-

[1] Unius et ejusdem opinionis (mirum videri potest) judicamus auctores Catholicos, et sequaces hæreticos; excusamus magistros, et condemnamus scholasticos: qui scripserunt libros, sunt hæredes cœli; quorum librorum defensores detrahuntur ad infernum.—Vin. Lirinens. in St. Cyprian's case.

tion; assuming the human nature, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, from a pure virgin;[1] so that the whole Godhead and manhood are individually united in one nature for ever.[2]

III. 1. That in this human nature thus dignified, He, after a holy and excellent life, made a pure and unspotted offering of Himself upon the Cross; by that His death and sacrifice to appease the wrath and satisfy the justice of the Father, for the sins of the world, and reconcile mankind to God, and purchase his salvation.[3]

2. That Christ, after the death of His body, was buried, descended into Hell (personally, or virtually and powerfully).[4]

3. That the third day He rose again, from the dead,[5] in the same perfect nature of God-man; in which person, after forty days conversing with His disciples, opening their understanding to the Scriptures, qualifying them to teach and convert all nations to His new and holy religion, by supernatural gifts and power to work miracles, He ascended up into Heaven in their sight; where He is to remain, in a glorified state, at the right hand of God the Father—that is, in the most resplendent majesty, interceding for us by the merits of His obedience,

[1] I John, i., 2; i. 14; xvi., 28, 29.

[2] Luke, i. 33, 34; I. Tim., ii., 5.

[3] I. Pet., iii., 18; Rom., v., 9; Matt., xxvii., 50; Mark, xv., 44, 45; Luke, xxiii., 46.

[4] I. Pet., iii., 19.

[5] Matt., xxviii., 19; Mark, xv.; Luke, xxiv., 1; Acts, i., 9; Heb., i., 6.

4. Until His return to judge the world in righteousness at the last day.[1]

5. That the Holy Ghost is God, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, equality, glory, and eternity with Both.

6. That He is our Intercessor, on earth, to the Father and Son, our Sanctifier for the work of grace in our hearts, our *Paraclete* and Comforter during the absence of the Son, our Advocate in Heaven; the Inspirer of the Prophets and Apostles, by whom God spake to, and directs, His Church.[2].

IV. That in this Trinity none is afore and after another, none greater or less; but that the entire Three Persons be co-equal and co-eternal.[3]

V. That the Holy Scriptures, so inspired and dictated, are the very Oracles of God, of undoubted authority, (as has already been proved),[4] completely furnished with laws and precepts, sufficient to direct us into all necessary truth, and communicating to us the whole counsel of God importing our salvation; and is, therefore, the Infallible Rule of Faith; and, as delivered to us by and from the Prophets and Apostles, are now to have no more either added to or detracted from them, though an Angel from Heaven should teach otherwise.[5] In the mean while, we are to understand,

[1] I. Thess., iv., 16; Acts, x., 42; II. Tim., iv., 1; I. Pet., iv. 5.

[2] S. John, xiv., 26; xv., 26; xvi., 7-13.

[3] Ibid., x., 30; II. Cor., xiii., 14. [4] Vol. i., chap. vii.

[5] Deut., iv., 1; Gal., i., 8; iii., 15; Rev., xxii., 18, 19. The Books or Scriptures, thus divinely penned and delivered to the Church, have been given before in Vol. i., chap. vii.

that the authority of this Word of God is, in [point of] time, previous to and before the Church.[1]

VI. 1. That there is a Catholic or Universal Church; that is, a congregation of faithful persons, professing this holy religion, which has faculty and power to judge and determine points of faith[2]—so that nothing be repugnant to the Scriptures, but according to the analogy of the Faith; and has also right to ordain such decent rites and ceremonies, as make for edification and good order; provided they be not contrary to the same Word of God, whereof she is the depository.[3]

2. That this Church, called also the Flock,[4] or Spouse of Christ her Head, denoting unity of faith, is militant here on earth, as in continual hostility against the world, the flesh, and the Devil, and not as slaves to them, as the wicked are; and she shall, in time hereafter, be triumphant with Christ in Heaven.

3. That this Church is but one body, though consisting of many members and particular Churches,[5] and yet is not its unity wholly in the form of government or ceremonies, but in its doctrine limited to certain Articles, Creeds, and other symbols agreeable thereto, without receiving or admitting any new ones whatsoever. Thus in the true Church there is unity of faith, unity of worship, and unity of head; which is Christ alone.

[1] I. Pet., i., 23.
[2] Matt., xvi., 18; Ephes., ii., 21; II. Tim., iii., 10.
[3] I. Cor., xi., 23, 24, 25; Rom., xii., 6; Tit., i. 9.
[4] John, x., 27.
[5] Rom., xii., 15; I. Cor., xii., 12, 13, 14.

4. That she is visible, though often clouded by persecution, and driven into the Wilderness, for a while and in part; nor can she perish, but continues in actual being, and so shall remain to the end of the world.[1]

5. That she is Catholic, that is, Orthodox and Apostolical, professing the same faith, of all nations, sexes, ages,[2] without dependence on any certain earthly seat or head, save Christ alone; nor, being diffusive, can she err in fundamentals, nor can all its members totally apostatize, though particulars may.

VII. 1. That there is a Communion of Saints,[3] that is, of all holy men and women, living members of the same body or head, with the saints departed; death, which separates souls and bodies, separating none from the mystical union and communion in Christ. And this communion consists in a society of the same hope, estimation, emulation, imitation on our parts, and of desire and mutual supplication on theirs; blessing and praising God for the holy and worthy examples both of the living and departed; honouring their memory, and enlarging our bowels of charity to each other.

2. That there is a remission and pardon of sins through the merits and for the sake of Jesus Christ, remitting the original stains to us in baptism, upon true and sincere repentance, according to the tenor of the Gospel.[4]

[1] Acts, x., 35; Matt., xxviii., 19, 20.

[2] Coloss., i., 18; John, x., 16; Mark, viii., 15.

[3] Coloss., ii., 19; Hebr., xii., 22, 23.

[4] Luke, xxiv., 47; Acts, ii., 38; Rom., vi., 2, 7; Acts, xxii., 16.

3. That there is a resurrection of the flesh or body, (as our English Creed expresses it) when Christ shall come to judge the quick and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end.[1]

4. That there is a life everlasting, after this bodily death and resurrection, to the saints immediately, body and soul re-united, when the saints shall come into the world of spirits, and be endued like them with like bodies.[2]

5. That there will be then a reward of eternal bliss and happiness to the righteous, and eternal misery and pains inflicted on the ungodly and wicked on that terrible day.[3]

This is the true Catholic Christian faith, which has been received and taught by Christ, and His Apostles and successors, and confirmed by miracles, signs, and wonders, and so delivered to us from age to age by universal and indefectible tradition; and in which we of the Church of England agree both with the Papists, Calvinists, Lutherans, and other reformed and evangelical Churches, as appears by all their symbols and confessions. And as to other matters of doctrine and discipline, she, the Church of England, reforming from the corruptions of other Churches, farther teaches and holds what is contained in those Articles, maturely agreed upon in the year 1562, and what may by good and just consequence be derived from them.

[1] I. Thess., iv., 16; Luke, i., 33; Rev., xi., 15.
[2] Dan., xii., 2; Exod., vi., 8; I. Cor., xv.
[3] II. Cor., v. 1; I. Pet., v. 18; Héb., v. 9.

SECTION III. TENETS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

PART I.—1. ORIGINAL SIN.

That through the corruptions of man's nature he is stained and sadly weakened by Original Sin,[1] derived from Adam's fatal and wilful lapse, so that concupiscence itself is sin even in the unregenerate; and that man is void of original righteousness, continually inclined to sin, and subjected thereby to the curse, unless taken off by Christ through faith and baptism.

There are yet other pious divines, even of the same Church, who think it not so much guilt in us as in Adam; there being, indeed, no office of prayer extant, to pray against it; but that we deprecate its wretched consequence; concupiscence being the vice and obliquity of our nature, not her sin. But so it is that, since this lamentable bruise, the condition of man is such, that he, of his own strength, is not able to perform any acceptable work or service without the assistance of God's preventing, concomitant grace, and spiritual regeneration in Christ working in him both to will and to do.[2] But this grace, in the mean time, is not a third substance different from soul and body, (as some imagine) but a distinct principle put into us by Almighty God, without which we cannot operate. Nor yet does this necessity of grace suppose our nature originally

[1] Rom., v., 12, 16; v. ii., 25; James, i., 14; I. Pet., ii., 11; Coloss., iii., 5; Gen., vi., 5.

[2] Rom., viii., 7, 8; I. Cor., ii., 14; II. Cor., iii., 5; John, xv., 5; Phil. ii., 13.

corrupted; since beyond Adam's mere nature something else was requisite both in him and all his offspring [to preserve original purity].

2. FREE-WILL.

As to liberty of will since the Fall,[1] some of our divines will not allow it; others, that it still remains, and is no consequent of original sin; fearing that the contrary opinion should take away both reward, punishment, and even the immortality of the soul itself; and therefore piously hold that, whenever sin prevails, it is not so much through want of ability and power, as of making use of that power, and that we may do all that God requires of us, if we do all we can.

3. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

The Reformed Church of England holds, that man is justified only by the merits of Jesus Christ, for whose sake he is accepted as righteous before God the Father, and that through faith, and not for or yet without works; not as the cause, but fruits and marks of his faith and its sincerity;[2] so that even the best works, before justification, do not please God, nor merit grace *ex condigno;* but still retain the nature of sin. The Catholic Church, therefore, utterly rejects works of pretended supererogation; seeing that, when we have done all we are enjoined, we are but unprofitable servants.[3]

[1] John, i., 13; Rom., iii., 24; I. Cor., vi., 19; I. Cor., i., 30.

[2] Ephes., ii., 8, 9; Rom., iv., 5; I. Cor. i., 30; Heb., xi., 6; Rom., viii., 23; Gal. v. 17.

[3] Luke, xvii., 10.

4. CHRIST ALONE OUR PROPITIATION.

The true Catholic Church holds, that since Christ was made man in all things like unto us,[1] (sin only excepted) He alone is and was without blemish, by virtue of which He was that acceptable sacrifice, that Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world; and none else, though baptized and regenerate, can propitiate for us; for in many things we offend all.

5. OF SIN AFTER BAPTISM.

The True Church holds that, though the least sin be in itself worthy of damnation, yet the most heinous sinners are pardonable even after Baptism and receiving of the Holy Ghost; a regenerate man may, through infirmity, yea, and that wilfully, sin; and, by the infinite mercies of a gracious God, repent and obtain pardon; except he sin maliciously and spitefully against that Blessed Spirit; so that every mortal sin, after illumination, is not that mortal sin.[2]

Sins do yet exceedingly differ: some are not of so deep a stain as others; namely, such as we fall into through infirmity, surprise, natural imperfection, evil inclinations and *quotidianæ incursionis*, not consented to or delighted in. So that, if we strive against them sincerely and vigorously, God will pity our imperfection, whilst the very smallest sin, if observed, ceases any longer to be an infirmity. Wherefore, not the first

[1] John, i., 14, 29; I. Pet., ii., 22; Heb., ii., 17, 18.

[2] I. John, v., 16, 17; Matt., xiii., 31; Luke, xii., 10.

motion of the sensual appetite is sin, but it is the actual deliberation and inordinate desire which makes it so.

Sins before Illumination (that is, Baptism) are pardoned in Baptism; sins after, must be re-sprinkled, that is, purged by repentance and the baptism of penitential tears, and a contrite heart. Yet, not the shedding of tears for sin, but our utterly forsaking sin, procures remission.[1] He who is *attrite* leaves his sin; but he who is contrite obtains the pardon.

This irremissible sin is a malicious, spiteful, propensely wilful apostacy, for which there was no sacrifice or atonement in the Law; nor, indeed, was there for any wilful sin whatever, though without those aggravating circumstances; but such were left to the mercy of God's extraordinary grace. For, had there been a sacrifice capable of propitiating for it, David, after his murder and adultery, would have given enough; such being reserved for the High Priest's presenting Christ in the Sanctuary, into which he entered but once a-year. Wherefore, when it is said—Sacrifice and meat-offerings thou wouldst not have; but a body Thou hast made me—it has recourse to the Incarnation of the Son of God.—Lo! I come; in the Volume of thy Book it is written of me, that I should fulfil Thy will.[2] And this He did for all those sins, unpardonable under the Law; no sacrifice being found sufficient to expiate such, till Christ entered into the Holiest, not with the blood of bulls and goats, but His own, which there, that is, in Heaven, intercedes for the greatest offenders. His

[1] II. Cor., ii., 7. [2] Heb., x., 5, 9.

blood, that is, the merits of His suffering and obedience, procures pardon for all, but such as obstinately and finally go on in sin. Speaking a word against the Holy Ghost signifies a contumacious acting against Him, as did Corah and his company; for that even this high offence is otherwise remissible appears in the *Pharisees*, to whom yet our Blessed Lord afforded miracles, preaching, and admonition, without the least effect upon their malicious obstinacy; so Pharaoh, and some of the Jews both in and after our Saviour's time, resisted His holy motions, persevering in their malicious acting, against clear conviction. Now, though all wilful sin, growing into habit, so not persisted in till death, be not this deadly sin, it is a most dangerous step towards it. This, then, is some consolation, that he who is sorry for his sin has not committed that sin.

PART II.

1. CONFESSION.

The Reformed Catholic holds, that confession is a duty to God—not *auricular* to a priest only, as a sacrament necessary to salvation, (as being without element to make it so), and grounds her opinion on the Apostles,[1] who have prescribed self-examination and confession of injuries one to another, not to the priest as indispensable, not in common, not theatrically, (says St. Chrysostom), but to such as we have wronged and offended. Sins committed against God are to be con-

[1] II. Cor., xiii., 5; Jam., v., 16.

fessed to God only; scandalous and notorious sins, to the Church; and, in case of an unquiet, doubtful, and unsatisfied conscience, to some skilful, learned divine (versed in cases) for advice and comfort, and absolution —nor yet as effecting any thing by virtue of the words or form, but as declaring pardon to the truly penitent, because already pardoned, if penitent. Nor this as of absolute necessity, but as of great use to burdened and afflicted consciences; and, as we said, for direction, resolution, caution, restraint: to cure the wounded, erect the depressed, humble the sinner, and restore his peace. But those only are obliged to seek it as are noted by the Church for public and scandalous offences. The Apostles only had the power extraordinary of binding and loosing; but the faculty (as in them) was not to descend upon others to perpetuity, but for a season. Secret sins against God, to God are to be revealed in secret; and public offences openly to the Church; and if to the priest, as in those cases, without naming persons, or the circumstances, if immodest.

2. PREDESTINATION.

The Reformed Christian holds, that *Predestination*[1] to eternal life was from eternity; since He who created man must needs know what will happen to man; and that whoever is saved, him has God fore-ordained should be so; for those whom he foreknew would take

[1] Luke, xii., 32; John, vi., 37; Rom., viii., 29, 30; Ephes., i., 3, 4; II. Tim., i. 9; John, x., 28, 29; Rom., ix., 15; I. Thess., ii., 12; Matt., xxv., 24.

hold of grace, and obey, He predestinated to conform: and those He after calls; and whom He calls, He justifies, (making them His adopted sons) and whom He justifies, He saves and glorifies.

In the mean time, as to further intuition into these recondite mysteries, we are to limit our curiosity by that which is set bounds to by revelation. If God foresees the future, He has necessarily foreseen and established the event. There is, then, a distinguishing grace, by which some are absolutely elected, and by virtue thereof absolutely saved, by such potent and infallible means as are prepared for them; whilst others, not of that number, are not totally reprobated; all having sufficient means and grace afforded and offered to them, if they will make use of it. So that none miscarry, unless they willingly refuse to co-operate with this grace, according to the talents received. In the mean time, such as have been in an extraordinary manner wrought on, and, as it were, irresistibly excited to holiness, have reason to believe they are absolutely elected, so long as they persist and continue in that pious course, but, as for certainty, there is little save those hopeful signs. Whilst that more rigid doctrine of absolute Decrees is apt to beget and suggest unworthy thoughts of a most Gracious God, as Author, first of sin, and then of damning for it, to the encouraging of profaneness and hurrying to despair; destroying all industry and love to the most loving and most indulgent Father, who is not an implacable but a gentle Master, full of mercy, patience, unspotted justice; and what-

ever is amiable in the best of men, is supereminently so in Him.

But concerning these profound and astonishing depths, such as are also Original Guilt, Grace, Free-will, &c., the Holy Scriptures are to be searched with humble prayer, where we shall find sufficient concerning their being truths, though not to our comprehension of their manner. And we are not obliged to bring all that concerns our salvation to the test and criterion of human science and the schools of Plato and Aristotle, of which they are incapable; but with a humble faith adore what we cannot fathom.

As to our own particular, then: when one considers how and why God has abandoned so many millions of Pagans and miserable Infidels, (than which there seems nothing more incomprehensible in all His conduct) that it should please God to think of one distinctly amongst that vast multitude in this corner of the universe, in this atheistical conjuncture, in this point of eternity—this, when a man seriously contemplates, one becomes in one's own eyes as nothing; one is ravished with humble admiration. Alas! alas! we poor worms, finite frail creatures, made up of dust, and resolvable into dust, see not, know not that infinite succession of objects, which are continually before the Sovereign Intelligencer, nor the series and chains which this age has with the ages and world to come; nor the place which these people (whose lot and ignorance we so deplore) have in this concatenation; nor the right of God's justice and dispensation concerning them. We

consider not that a thousand years are to Him but as a day, &c.; that one nation is as a hundred nations, and a hundred but as one to God, who is able to draw infinite out of nothing, as we ourselves are produced.

Let us, therefore, not be high-minded, but fear, and not look for new lights so near, or this Infinite Splendour, as to be confounded with its Glory; but rather, with our Blessed Lord, say, "Father, I thank Thee, that Thou hast not revealed these things to the wise, but to babes; even so, because it is Thy pleasure." Where is, then, the wise? where is the disputer of this world?

3. COUNCILS.

The true Christian Religion holds that, though kings and supreme magistrates have the only right to assemble General Councils, for the vindicating of truth, condemning and reforming errors and corruptions in the churches under their dominion, and that they are to be highly reverenced, and their Decrees and Canons to be obeyed, yet she also holds that they may err, and *have* grossly erred, when they decree things which are not agreeable to the Word of God. So that notoriously have not only the second Council of Nice, but many others since, especially the late Synod of Trent, though she embrace the first four General Councils, and will stand by their Decrees and Constitutions.

The same Holy Christian Church admits of none to the ministerial function but such as are lawfully called and ordained by such as have public character and Divine authority so to do.[1]

[1] Ephes., iv., 11; I. Tim., iv., 14; v., 22.

The Christian Church holds that the church offices of prayer and sacraments ought to be in the vulgar and commonly understood tongue, and thinks nothing is more plainly set down and recommended in all the Holy Scriptures—proposes the Lord's Prayer for a perfect pattern, and the whole moral law for practice.[1]

4. SACRAMENTS.

The Holy Church of Christ holds but two Evangelical Sacraments were ordained by the Lord Jesus, as necessary to salvation, and marks of her profession, where they can be had, viz., Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, as having only these visible signs and symbols annexed to them, ordained by God. Other Sacraments, improperly so called, are not necessary, as being not (like these) of virtue to strengthen our faith and charity, nor bear they so near relation to the grace and benefits received from their institution, as the washing away and cleansing of sins, and nourishing the faithful with the mystical participation of the body and blood of Christ; whereby the worthy recipient has title to all the effects of His meritorious passion and obedience as a pledge of everlasting life.[2]

She also holds, that the unworthiness of the minister officiating does not evacuate or hinder the efficacy of the Sacraments, to those who are duly prepared to receive them.[3]

The Sacred Christian Church holds, that Baptism[4] is not only a sign of our profession and mark of distinction

[1] I. Cor., xiv., 6, 9, 14, 17, 26. [2] Acts, ii., 38; I. Cor., xi., 24.
[3] Matt., xxiii., 1; Phil., i., 15; I. Cor., iii., 7.
[4] See Appendix A.

from Infidels, but also of regeneration and reception into the Church, whereby the promises of remission of sins and adoption are visibly sealed by the Holy Ghost, confirming grace and faith, by the prayers and offices of the Church; and that *infant-baptism* is most agreeable to our Blessed Saviour's institution. Wherefore, she believes and holds, that Baptism has influence on all the periods of our life, and to be renewed and actually applied by the Holy Eucharist, if our repentance be timely and sincere.[1]

The Holy Christian Church holds, that, though Confirmation be no Sacrament, as using no visible element, according to that of St. Augustine; *Accedat verbum ad Elementum, et fit Sacramentum*; yet that it is an excellent part of Christian discipline, by which children, coming to years of discretion, are examined and taught what they are enjoined now to perform of themselves; and that it is a suppletory to early Baptism, and a corroboration of its graces, rightly made use of.

The Church of Christ, truly reformed, holds, that the Supper of the Lord[2] is a Sacrament of our Redemption by the death and passion of Christ upon the cross, of which only the faithful, prepared, do receive the benefit. That the elements are made sacramental by consecration, fraction, and distribution, and thereby convey the real body and blood of Christ after a heavenly, spiritual,

[1] Matt., xxviii., 17, 20; Rom., vi., 3; I. Cor., vi., 19; Tit., iii., 5; I. Cor., xii., 13; Mark, xvi., 16; Acts, ii., 14-42.

[2] I. Cor., x., 16, 17; Matt. xxvi., 29; Luke, xxii., 19, 20; Mark, xiv., 22.; I. Cor., xl., 23-34.

and mysterious manner, but without any transubstantiation or change of the species, and therefore in no wise to be worshipped. That they seal to, and possess us of, an interest in all that Christ has, by his suffering and obedience, promerited for us.

She holds, that both the wine, as well as the bread, ought to be received of all the communicants, laymen as well as priests, by Divine and indispensable institution.

She holds, that the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, once offered, was a full, perfect, and complete oblation, propitiatory and satisfactory, for the sins of all the world; and therefore needs no bloody repetition, or suppletory for quick and dead, as Papists pretend in their superstitious masses.[1]

She holds that, after the words of consecration and efficacy of benediction of the elements, the symbols become changed into the body and blood of Christ, after a sacramental, spiritual, and consequently real manner; and that all worthy communicants receive Christ to all the real purposes and effects of His Passion, instrumentally conveying its influence and operation; bread in natural substance; Christ in sacramental. Nor are the symbols more really given than really received; and so, as really, nourish the soul, as the elements do the body; the first substance being changed by grace, though remaining the same in nature; nor barely as bread and wine, naked figures, and figures

[1] Acts, xx., 28; Rom., v., 6-9; Gal., iii., 13; I. Cor., vi., 20; Acts, x., 43; Heb., ix., 12-22.

only; but such as exhibit Christ himself, and puts the worthy recipient into sure possession of Him, sealing and giving him federal right and title to all His promises and promerits. Wherefore Holy Church holds a *real presence;* (and so the Canon of the Church of England, *really and indeed*); and no understanding person of her communion denies it; since a thing is not one jot less *real* for being spiritual; and thus are the gifts and graces of God's Holy Spirit real and sensible graces, and not things ambiguous or unintelligible to those who are not altogether immersed in gross and material objects, which have no place in this sacred mystery.

The Christian Catholic and Orthodox Faith affirms a real change, retaining the ancient and middle belief; but presumes not to determine the *mode* or manner, because no where revealed, nor any ways appearing; besides that, she has the possession of above twelve hundred years, from our Saviour's institution, to the contrary; exploding the gross and corporeal change, as now imposed by the Church of Rome.

The Holy Church adores not the elements; but holds, that the sacred elements, so set apart and consecrated, are an homage and (as may be said) an act of adoration; and the Church of England receives it in that humble gesture. Forasmuch as Christ is thus present in an extraordinary and mysterious manner, and with so great advantages. But this, her adoration, is to her Lord Christ alone, at the right hand of the Father, adoring His flesh and blood in the mystery and

venerable usage of the symbols, which represent and impart Him to the soul of the worthy communicant.

The Church of Christ, truly reformed, as to oblation in the Holy Sacrament, affirms, with the ancients, that it signifies only, *Oblatum celebrare, et memoriâ revocare;* or, as St. Chrysostom calls it, Ἀναμνήσιν; and that if Christ were really offered, He must as often be put to death; whilst the Apostle tells us plainly, He was but *once* offered;[1] so that, if sacrificed in a natural sense, when first instituted, it could not be propitiatory; seeing, then, His Father must have been reconciled before His Passion. Wherefore, the Church of England holds it *representative* and *memorative* only of that which was after to be done, and now of what has actually been done. And she also holds it to be a sacrifice both propitiatory and impetratory; because (as Mr. Thorndike well observes) the oblation of it to Almighty God, with and by the prayers and praises of the Church, does render God propitious, by obtaining those benefits which the death and Passion of Christ do represent. And, therefore, in her offices for the Church Militant, she beseeches God for the universal peace of the Church, and the whole state of Christians, and especially of those who then actually communicate.

5. MARRIAGE LAWFUL FOR THE CLERGY.

The Church of England, as truly Catholic and Christian, maintains, that priests, deacons, and men in holy orders, under the Gospel, may lawfully, as all others,

[1] [Compare Rom., vi., 10-21, with Heb., ix., 11-28.]

marry, if they find it expedient and necessary, and that by warrant from the Holy Scriptures.[1]

6. AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH AND HER ORDERS.

The Church of England, also, with the Catholic, holds, that the Church is a corporation, founded and settled by God to maintain the communion of those who believe and are of that body; and, therefore, has power to maintain good order for the exercising of her holy offices, and all other circumstances, and to set limits, as occasion may require.[2] Thus, for liturgies and public prayers, praises, reading of Scriptures, expounding, or preaching; though there were no express precept of the New Testament what offices the public service of God is to consist of; forasmuch as, before the Gospel, they were always in use among God's people, she holds, that all traditions and ceremonies not repugnant to God's Holy Word, and ordained by public and legitimate authority, are not only lawful, but highly necessary for order, decency, and edification; and, therefore, alterable according to the diversity of times, nations, and customs, by the same authority.

She holds, that the governors, presidents, and superintendents of the Christian Church have the power of the keys, and faculty to exercise them upon notorious and scandalous offenders, by binding and loosing; and that such as are duly excommunicated and rescinded

[1] Gen., i., 27, 28; I. Cor., vii., 2; Heb., xiii., 4; Tit., i., 6; I. Cor., ix., 6.

[2] I. Cor., xi., 2, 3; I. Tim., ii., 1; James, v., 14, 15.

from the body of the Church are to be avoided, until, by true repentance and worthy penance, they be by the same authority reconciled to, and received into the Church again.[1]

The Church Catholic, truly reformed, holds, that archbishops, bishops, priests, and deacons, rightly and lawfully consecrated and ordained, are distinct orders in the Church of Christ, approved by and agreeable to the institution of the Lord Jesus, and uninterruptedly succeeding from the Apostles' time to the present age. And that this sacred Government of Episcopacy anciently took place immediately after the Apostles, and most probably even in their days; it being hardly conceivable, as so great an alteration as that of Presbyters, or Congregational, to Episcopal, could, in so short a space, have prevailed over the whole Church, and so long continued, had it been otherwise.

In the mean while, Episcopacy essentially considered, is only the appointment of one person of eminent sanctity and sufficiency to have the care of all the Churches within a certain precinct or diocese so authorised, (not arbitrarily or absolutely, but by laws, and in conjunction with a convenient number of assistants) that all the churches under his inspection be provided with good and able pastors; and to see to the discovery and repressing of all exorbitances, either of the ministers or their flocks. And that there is no one superior bishop, by any right divine, above another, but all in their

[1] Matt., xviii., 16, 17; I. Cor., v., 4, 5; I. Tim., i., 20; Tit., i. 11; iii., 10; Rom., xvi., 17.

respective governments are of like authority and power, though, as to civil preference, there may be a difference by the favour of princes, as that of Rome and Constantinople, because they were the imperial cities and the courts.

Lastly, she holds, that it is in the lawful power of church governors to order and appoint forms of public worship and such rites and ceremonies, as are decent and reverend for the solemnity of divine service; and if the matter be agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, and of indifferent nature, compel the refractory and peevish to conformity, especially so that it be not imposed as essential parts of worship, but as things alterable, as times and circumstances may require.[1]

7. CIVIL SUPREMACY OF THE STATE.

The Holy Catholic Reformed Church of Christ holds, that princes and supreme magistrates have, in their respective dominions, as keepers of both Tables,[2] the lawful cognizance of all causes, ecclesiastical as well as temporal and civil, for the restraining, punishing, and even putting to death evil doers, and for rewarding the good and obedient, of what degree soever, and may reform abuses and errors crept into either Church or State, and command their subjects to serve in lawful wars, to repel real injuries, or defend their kingdom; finally, that rebellion is upon what pretence soever unlawful.

[1] See Appendix B.

[2] Rom., xiii., 2, 4, 7; Titus, iii., 1; I. Pet., ii., 13, 14.

Thus was Moses king in Jeshurum, constituted by God keeper both of the Trumpets and Tables; and he it was (not Aaron) who delivered the ritual law. So, long after, David also instituted the courses of the priests, and Solomon deposed Abiathar, the high priest; Christ, our legislator, under the new law, detracting nothing from, but rather corroborating the secular power. So that, magistrates miscarrying in their duty, the people are obliged to obey; so their commands be lawful, though inconvenient; for no man may, on any pretence, rebel, but rather suffer for well doing.

PART III.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, CONTRASTED WITH THE CHURCH OF ROME.

As to the rest, the duties and things, which the Reformed Church imposes to do and believe, are only such as are in themselves morally good, and tend to the perfection of our natures; and therefore do not oblige her sons and daughters to those trifling performances, which have nothing of real substance, as the bare reciting of such a number of Creeds, Paters, Aves, counted by beads and bawbles fitter for children. For religion is a rational and serious service of God; nor multiplies the orders of idle monks and vagrant friars, nor approves of pilgrimages, processions, the worship of images, and pictures of God the Father, Christ, or His saints, reliques, &c. She places no devotion in habits, *agnus-Deis*, scapulas, or celibacy by vows not in our power; but such as we are obliged to in our baptismal

promises, in holding which, she has assured promises of Divine assistance and acceptance, upon our earnest and sincere endeavour and application to Almighty God for His grace.

Upon all which premises the Church of England, reformed from the corruptions which we have enumerated in our former Chapter,[1] and restored to primitive purity, agrees and is in community with the true and ancient Catholic faith, wherever professed at this day. Nor separates she from any thing which, as such, she finds in any national or particular church, though in other things (which are corruptions in them) she abstains. Thus, with the present Greek Church she holds communion in their exhibiting the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist in both species, rejects not the historical use of images, but the worship; as also purgatory, extreme unction, prayers to the saints, not the commemoration [of them.] Auricular Confession as a Sacrament, not private, for counsel and direction, comfort and ease of afflicted consciences. She permits the clergy to marry; and in all and most of which she agrees with the Nestorian, Jacobites, Abyssines, Maronites, Armenian Churches.[2]

Touching the existence, being, and attributes of God the Father, the Church of England differs from none of the modern famous confessions, and the same affirms of God the Word, and Sacred Spirit, and in most of their other Articles. But she never can depart from holding the Scriptures to be the only Rule of

[1] Chapter xi. [2] See for more in Paget's *Christianography*.

Faith, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; rejecting their opinions who either make tradition equal to them, or that they are defective or imperfect without them.

She maintains that the simple belief and practice of those certain and uncontroverted truths, wherein all parties agree, are sufficient for salvation. As to other differences and usages in religion less material, she bears with them, without prejudice or uncharitable censure.

The Church of England rejects not tradition, such as is taught by Christ and His Apostles, and by them preached to those who delivered it in ensuing ages, constantly and universally, according to the rule of *Vincentius Lirinensis;* or by which we are practically instructed how to understand the writer's mind in fundamentals, namely, such doctrines as are either plainly or by necessary consequence deducibly contained in Scripture, and agreeable to the sense of the Fathers of the purest ages after Christ. And such tradition she holds to be derived from as full authority as the Word itself.

The Creeds of the Church of England consist not in general principles only, in the bosom of which many other articles are included, equally necessary to be implicitly believed, but are as minute an explication of those *Prima Credibilia* as is necessary to salvation.

The Church of England gives to the Blessed Virgin and all the saints memorative honours, no inward soul submission, in her prayers and offices, no dependence, no invocations, no intercessions, no incense, thurification, candles, or consumptive offerings, or genuflexions;

but a commemoration of their exemplary and holy lives, patience, fortitude, and other virtues in suffering for the name of Christ; praising God for His grace and gifts in them, and praying that we may follow their steps, as they did Christ's.

The Church of England, as she did not demolish images tumultuously, but gravely and with good consideration, so she forbids not a decent use of historical representations, as did the first Christians, but with great care.

The Church of England affirms the Scriptures to be infallible, not the Pope, no, nor a Council with or without the Pope. She holds the Old Apostles' Creed, not the New of Trent; to trust in Christ's merits only, not in our own, nor in any saint's. That there is a hell, no purgatory or limbus.

The Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, in commemoration of His passion, she holds with the Church of Rome, but not as a propitiation for the dead; she allows with her a real presence, but not also a corporeal; that both species were by Christ's institution given to all, also both affirm. But the Church of Rome takes away the cup; therefore, receiving with the Church of England is the safer.

That in the Public Office or Liturgy of the Church of England is nothing but what is consonant to the faith, the pontificians grant. In their Missal there are many errors. Service and prayers in an unknown tongue, Scripture reproves, the Church of Rome maintains. Therefore, the service and devotions of the

Church of England are to be preferred. And for ten years together after the Reformation, the Papists came both to prayers and sermons, the Pope offering to have consecrated and confirmed our Liturgy, would Queen Elizabeth have acknowledged his Headship.[1]

To worship God alone, say the Papists, is most safe and pious; so does the Church of England, but not images. To pray to God in the name of Christ both grant, not to saints and through their merits. Therefore, most safe is the doctrine and practice of the Church of England, in her prayers, devotions, and intercessions; so that whatever the Church of England holds not of that of Rome are plainly superfluous, doubtful, and dangerous additions to the truth; such as are her doctrines of infallibility, Transubstantiation, purgatory, merits, works of supererogation, vain repetitions, rosaries, worshipping saints, angels, images, and reliques, with lustrations, sufflations, exorcisms, anathemas, chrisms, vows, pilgrimages, processions, incensing, probable doctrine, baptizing of bells, expurgatory indulgences, sham miracles, legends, and other traditions of men, novel inventions, and will worship, and innumerable other corruptions kept up for secular interests.

[1] Camden's Elizabeth. [Twisden, p. 175. Bramwell, i. 248. "For divers years in Q. Elizabeth's reign there was no recusant known in England; but even they who were most addicted to Roman opinions yet frequented our Churches and public assemblies, and did join with us in the use of the same prayers and divine offices, without any scruple, till they were prohibited by a papal bull for the interest of the Roman court."—Quoted by Dr. Wordsworth. Theoph. Anglic.]

The Church of England has in it as learned persons, more works of charity, better provision for her clergy (things well examined) than the Church of Rome, whatever is pretended.

The Church of England teaches devotion without superstition, is modest, not garish; practical, not speculative; sober, not fantastical; keeps a mean between extremes.

The Church of England is neither new from Luther, Henry the Eighth, nor Calvin, but as ancient as the Gospel, and communicating with more Christian Churches than any whatsoever, and with all in general, who are orthodox; and therefore is the most truly Catholic of any Church now extant in the world, and to be embraced before them all.

The Church of England has the Word of God and the Sacraments for its faith; and whoso believes, and does as that prescribes, is a member of the true Church, though not of the present Roman. And from any such Church in the world she does not separate; and so is more Catholic, and less schismatic. And if in what she holds they all agree, there is unity, and what is most united, is most safe.

The Church of England yet judges none uncharitably, who differ from her. But the question is between her and the Church of Rome (which is her only antagonist considerable who so uncharitably damns all, besides herself, and has altered the doctrine and discipline they so contend for)—we or they—we by substraction, they by addition? The case, says a learned

bishop,[1] is clear: The Apostles contracted this doctrine into a summary, that is, the *Creed.* The Primitive Fathers expounded it when it stood in need of clearer explication. The General Council of Ephesus forbade all men to exact any more of a Christian at the baptismal profession. Into this faith were we of the Church of England baptized; unto this faith do we adhere. Whereas the Church of Rome has changed and enlarged her Creeds by the addition of new Articles.[2]

We profess and avow that discipline which the whole Christian world practised during the first six hundred years, and all the Eastern, Southern, and Northern Churches to this day. They have changed the beginning of unity into an universality of jurisdiction, and sovereignty of power about General Councils, which the Christian world for six hundred years did never know, nor the greatest part of it even to this day acknowledge. Let St. Peter be the First or Chief, or (in a right sense) Prince of the Apostles, or first mover in the Church: all this extends but to a primacy of order; the sovereignty of ecclesiastical power was in the Apostolical College, to which a General Council now succeeds.

It is evident enough, whether they, or we of the Church of England do hold ourselves better to the legacy, and religion of Christ and His Apostles. Protestants do not attempt to make themselves a distinct body from the rest of the Christian world, much less

[1] Dr. Bramhall, Bishop of Derry.

[2] See Coun. Trent, sub finem 4th.

arrogate to themselves alone the name of the true Church, as do the Papists. But they content themselves to be part of the Catholic Church. That they have any difference among them, either in doctrine or discipline, it is the fault of the Court of Rome, which would not hear of an uniform reformation in the Western Church. But that their controversies are neither so many nor of such moment, as the Papists pretend, the harmony of confessions will demonstrate to all who inspect it. Let, then, this suffice for the justification of our excellent Church, which, as I said, judges none; but hopes and prays that some innocent persons among all, that with sincerity worship, pray to, and praise God in the Lord's Prayer, confess the true Catholic Creeds, as contained in that of the Apostles—following the laws of God to their power—approving both Testaments as the rule of faith, and who are incorporated into the Church by baptism—nourished by the Holy Eucharist—God may, and she hopes will, have pity for such; but for nothing else of the stubble and straw superstructed on that foundation. In a word, that the simple belief of these certain truths wherein all parties agree, cannot fail. For what remains, then, the truth of the Christian, and consequently of that of the Church of England, (which has been the scope and end of all our researches) from the being of God, creation, providence, economy, and government of the world, and His Church through so many ages, is made so perspicuous, as that there is no merit in believing it. It is so convincing, that, like the methods of geometry,

every part supports the other, and all of it depends upon such principles, as are almost self-evident, and by natural consequence as far as we are capable of any thing; so that none but invincible, obstinately blinded Atheists can deny it.

To conclude. The Church of England (whose preference we undertake) grounds all her positive Articles on the Sacred Scriptures, and is content to be judged (as Bishop Jewel long since undertook to prove) by the joint and constant consent and belief of the Fathers for the first five hundred years after Christ, when the Church was, by all men's confession, in her purest age; and by the councils held in those times, and to submit to them in all points of doctrine. Nor will she refuse any tradition that is universal and Apostolical; nor any definition of the Church, in which the Church has recourse to Holy Scriptures, and thrusts nothing in as fundamentals in the faith, which the Scripture is silent on. As for the rest, the Church of England is instructed with an excellent Body of Articles, doctrine of holiness, discipline, and order, both material and prudent, with a Government Apostolical; with dignity neither splendid nor sordid; too considerable for contempt, too little for envy or detraction; decent and grave, and, in truth, defective in nothing which would instruct and adorn a real Christian.

In a word, she is thus reformed by casting out what was justly offensive and intolerable; yet, by God's singular Providence, without the least tumult or violence, namely, by lawful authority both of Church and State,

maturely consulting Scripture, antiquity, and reason, rejecting nothing but what according to these qualifications was absolutely to be reformed; and therefore may worthily be that rule and *Norma* by which others should reform, and many have earnestly desired.

So true and Apostolic a Church is the Church of England, and so conformable with the Universal Church in its purest temper and constitution, that, if their foundation stand, ours cannot fail, no, though heaven and earth should mingle. And a severe sentence on us will take hold of them. For, as we have, *ex abundanti*, showed, we hold the ancient symbols they held; but those who have defected from these leave not us, but our most holy faith. And what they add, was never taught, much less received before. In these additions, too, we take leave of modern Rome, or rather, she departs from us, and has made the schism, whilst yet we are in communion with her, as she was, when for her faith she was spoken of through all the world.

Thus, we have demonstrated that the way of salvation is not at all uncertain in the Christian Church, as professed and reformed in the Church of England, (which was the motive that first urged and engaged me on this strict enquiry) seeing it evidently appears to be no other than the true and living way, which Jesus Christ has shown us. And of this are we strongly assured, by finding the disciples of the Apostles, fathers, and doctors of the Church, both going before us, and succeeding to this age; professing the same faith, converting nations, planting it with their hands, watering

it even with their blood, and attesting it by all that can morally be required, to infix, propagate, and establish its belief. This they have effected by their preaching, miracles, writings, and sufferings, giving glory to its Divine Author, whose dictates and decrees when met in Council, and doctrine transmitted by book, are so unanimous in all that is necessary, that we dare provoke not only any single gainsayer, but all the host of them to produce a solid argument to the contrary, before equal and impartial judges.

To sum up all, I will conclude both this Chapter and present Treatise in the best words, a little varied, which even that unhappy Doctor[1] spake and published, and happy for him had he rested there. "That the evidence which the good Providence of God has given me of my adherence to the Christian faith, as by the Church of England professed, is, after all my inquiry, altogether as great as I could in reason have expected; and I am sure much greater than I needed in modesty have desired. And the satisfaction, that upon the inquiry I have received, is so very great that, as much as I esteem myself obliged to the goodness of the Divine Providence for the standing work of my redemption, I think myself no less obliged for the wonderful and amazing evidence that he has vouchsafed me of it. The security of the gift is as invaluable as the gift itself; for it is certainly the highest contentment that human nature is capable of, to live not with a mere fluctuating

[1] Dr. Parker, since Bishop of Oxford, in his *Demonstratio Evangel.*

hope and unexamined belief of things so infinitely important, but a just and reasonable assurance of immortal felicity."

All which considered, seriously perpended, weighed, and compared, to the utmost of my poor ability, *here*, that is, in communion with the Church of England, as the most Catholic and Apostolic now upon the face of the whole earth, do I fix myself; and shall, by the goodness and assistance of Almighty God enabling me, continue to my life's end.

Hic terminus est. Amen!

CONCLUSION.

The substance, then, and conclusion of the whole matter is this: That Almighty God, having created the universe, made man to be the prince of the sublunary world, designed for a celestial, to glorify and contemplate Him; and in order to the fitting him with faculties capable of a more perfect state, engraved in him a natural law, which should show him both the manner and reason of his duty; and gave him also abilities sufficient to perform it, with one only prohibition, for probation of his obedience and gratitude to his Benefactor, (easy and most reasonable by him to have been observed) namely, the restraining of his appetite from the taking of a certain fruit, growing amidst such variety of other delicious fruits and refreshments. But man, in whom then was all mankind, through the temptation of a newly lapsed and rebellious spirit, envious of his felicity, prevailing on the weaker vessel, seducing the man's com-

panion, and she, her husband, to eat of this forbidden tree, they both of them fell into the same condemnation, by which that law written in their hearts became, in a manner, blotted out. Their excellent faculties, knowledge, and original rectitude were so exceedingly weakened, darkened, and sadly disordered, that there was absolute need of its being totally renewed by a more supernatural law and grace, to restore and reconcile them to their offended Maker. For, though there was still some faint remainder and tracts of moral, and strictures of religion, so miserably were they worn out and clouded, not to say, altogether dead, that they could do nothing well, nothing indeed tolerable or agreeable to God, without great imperfection, and that so great, as never to have been able to recover the bliss and happy condition they were fallen from, condemned as they were, and banished to a lingering, anxious, and painful life; and after a short one here, to that death and dissolution with which they were threatened, upon their disobedience and breaking covenant.

But so it is, that the Divine Philanthropy and pity, commiserating his creature, and fleshly frailty, more than that of the sublimest fallen angels (who indeed fell from a more exalted, and none to tempt them but their own ambition and foul ingratitude) upon a second covenant, a new law and promise of better obedience for the time to come, was pleased to enter into terms with man and his posterity. And that, though for his prevarication, and in part to verify his former denunciation—"*In the day that thou eatest thereof* (namely, of

the forbidden fruit) *thou shalt surely die,*" he was to undergo both a temporal of the body, and an eternal death of the soul, as due to sin, yet in contemplation of One who interposed, and was indeed mighty to save, namely, the second Person in the Trinity, (who that He might propitiate, freely offered to take upon Him the human nature, suffer in it, and pay the price of their redemption) the Eternal Father was pleased not only to accept of it, and to impose on his sinning creature a temporal death only, but to make it a passage to a better life, and to restore him not to an earthly but a heavenly Paradise.

And albeit this was but obscurely hinted at the first, and almost all along, during the infancy of the antediluvian world, and still but glimmeringly in the patriarchal, till the prophetic age, though more and more illuminated as they approached nearer the Advent of this gracious Saviour, namely, the Messiah; yet was it from time to time made known to holy men peculiarly favoured. First, by tradition, whilst the ages of men were protracted, and so not needing letters to convey the truth; and after, when abbreviated, typically by way of symbol, in the Old Testament delivered to Moses and the Prophets to instruct the people, especially one selected nation, and most plainly, to all the world, by our Blessed Lord and Redeemer, in the New Testament, (or second Covenant) when the veil being rent and partition-wall removed, what was till now obscure became perspicuous. The law of carnal ordinances and substituted rites, difficult, uneasy, and in-

effectual, was changed into an easy, rational, spiritual, and delightful service; the Father (as it was said) of His immense kindness, accepting of the love and infinitely amazing charity of His beloved Son, who, for the sake of weak and sinful man, was now become incarnate of a Virgin, derived from the seed of our first lapsed parents; yet so that being divinely conceived, and therefore unstained and void of sin, by assuming human flesh, it might be possible for Him to suffer in our nature, and expiate not only for the offence of our progenitors, but for the whole race of mankind derived from them, upon their acceptance of those easy conditions of that second Covenant, namely, the living a holy life, in new obedience, according to His own revealed will. And this our Blessed Saviour did, by His own impeccant, holy, and exemplary life, admirable doctrine, perfect obedience, bitter passion, voluntary death—which yet (having purged our ransom to the full, and satisfied the Divine justice) He gloriously vanquished, when by His resurrection from the grave He triumphantly ascended into heaven; by which He has justified His undertaking for us, and is now at the right hand of His Father, continually representing the merits of His passion, as carrying with Him that blood into the Holy of Holies, which the high priest did, till then, yearly represent in the sanctuary as a figure of what was to come, the sacrifices of the law being too impotent to do away sins, or make the atonement.

Thus did our Great Saviour, interceding for His redeemed, that is, for as many as by new and universal

obedience (human and unavoidable infirmities abated) accept and take hold of those conditions, presented in His Holy Gospel — design them mansions with Himself in glory; and, in the mean time, during His necessary absence, (that the fulness of both Jew and Gentile may at last come in, and what He has determined be accomplished) assists the Church with His Holy Spirit.

Thus, has our benign Jesus, in our nature, fulfilled all righteousness for us; and, being God and man, by ineffable union has reconciled man to God, and made him a new creature. By this faith were the Fathers of old saved; namely, in virtue of the Messiah to come, as we are now in His being come; nor is there any other name under Heaven by which we can be saved. These good tidings, this whole economy, have we transmitted to us from the Sacred Records of Scripture, even the eternal Gospel of indefectible truth, containing the entire doctrine of salvation, the secret counsel of the Father, never to have been known to us by nature, but by grace—to the Greeks foolishness; but, to those who humbly embrace it, the power of God to eternal life.

This is the great and astonishing work, which the Lord our Saviour came to finish in His own person, and ordained and sent others, who should in His name declare His holy will and gracious intentions, upon our acceptance, repentance, and new obedience, a lively and operative faith in Christ Incarnate, crucified, dead, raised, ascended, and mediating. On these terms was

our reconciliation made, not as if by our works we merited aught, but of His free grace accepting our endeavours, sincerely complying with that Divine Assistance, sent from the Father and the Son; (from whom He from eternity proceeded) and who is to remain with the faithful to the end, and to lead them into all truth. He it is who supplies our defects, pities our infirmities, teaches us to pray, is our Intercessor here on earth to the Father and the Son, as the Son was to the Father and the Holy Ghost, when He was on earth, and is now in Heaven—whence He shall shortly come again, to judge the world in righteousness, and lead the elect, first their souls, and, at that time, both soul and body, (refined and glorified like His own) to those mansions of bliss and glory, which He has prepared for them from the beginning of the world. Amen!

These things Holy Scripture shows, ministers teach, the Gospel interpreting the Law, the event of things, the Gospel; grace rectifying nature, Moses mediating under the one, *figuratively;* Christ, under the other, *really;* the one by the blood of bulls and goats; (beggarly rudiments) the other, by the precious blood of JESUS, the Lamb of God, slain from the beginning of the world; the Moral Law, insculped and written on stone; the Evangelical, on the tables of the heart; that for a time, this for ever; that bringing death; this, life; that, terror and fear; this, love and assurance; that, temporal and earthly enjoyments; this, celestial and eternal. And thus to believe and do, is the whole duty of man and his perfection. This is the True Reli-

gion, the good old way, which we are not only to inquire after, and search for diligently, but walk in all the days of our life.

And here I should put the period, but to obviate one query, which, though more curious than at all necessary; yet, that I may leave nothing unanswered, which may obviate any possible temptation, and justify this gracious economy of Almighty God, in the method of His most wise and admirable dispensation, I think it not amiss to lengthen this conclusion with a paragraph or two. The question is, why Almighty God did not, by some more compendious way, either by ordaining man to a state of impossibly falling, solve in consequence all these difficulties, or, for to illustrate his power and grace, freely pardon it?

Indeed, the Omnipotent God, considered in His absolute power, could have remitted sin *gratis;* but, considered in that decree made from all eternity of punishing sin, and as a governor bound to maintain it, He was not to exercise that power. Now, no creature could reverse that decree, nor angel nor man satisfy Divine justice. Christ, then, was alone qualified for it, being without spot, even in His human nature, which rendered His offering holy; and His being God, gave it infinite value; so that by both He was fitted and qualified to discharge the debt. Christ, then, was the cause of remission, the Father being moved, for the invaluable price so paid, to free us from the punishment, and enter into a new covenant of grace, upon easy conditions of faith and obedience, before His

rigorous justice took place. Wherefore, He is called the Mediator of a better Covenant.

Now, that Almighty God was pleased to take this way rather than the other, (as it becomes not us to search beyond sobriety), since He is a free agent, and may do what He will with His own, even as the potter with the clay—what is man, that he should say to God, what doest thou? or what makest thou?—nevertheless, we are sure that what He has done and determined, according to the counsel of His own blessed will, is most wise, and absolutely just. For, had not man fallen and sinned, His attribute of mercy and compassion would have wanted an object, as well as His justice and righteousness. That stupendous work of His Omnipotence, to the admiration of angels and men, that of man's redemption by the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus, and all that He performed of wonderful in His life, death, resurrection, and ascension, the rewards of virtue, and punishment of vice had never been heard of; nor had mankind had occasion to glorify the riches of His grace and inexpressible love in Christ, which passes understanding, and is, of all His attributes, the most illustrious. All the creatures and works he made do not so much touch us as His love and mercy. It cost Him only His word, to raise the world out of nothing, (for He spake and it was done; He commanded, and they were made); but His love cost Him the heart-blood of His beloved Son. What greater or more worthy of God, than that a justice inflexible, and that could not forgive a crime unpunished, should, by a

stupendous act of clemency, pardon without punishing the criminal, and yet find out a way to manifest His most tender love, without the least suspicion of approving and loving our sins? And to preserve His sovereign authority, without destroying those who rebelled against it! That He should heal by stripes, and purchase life by dying, and exalt dust and ashes to partake of the Divine Nature![1]

These things pass the height of all ideas. Here only, then, it is where Majesty and Love sit together in the same throne, where they receive the adoration of worlds to eternity. Oh, depth! oh, love! love stronger than death, and incomprehensible! *Nec satiabor illis diebus dulcedine mirabili, considerare altitudinem consilii tui super salutem generis humani.*[2]

After all this, we are yet to date the benefit of pardon of our sins, and the effects of this infinite grace, not immediately from our Blessed Saviour's satisfaction, but from the time of our rightly believing in Him. His blood and death did only so procure His favour, as to put us in a capacity of being pardoned, whilst it is our repentance and universal obedience which actually applies it to our particular benefit. No faith can justify, but that which works by love for the love of Him who so loved us, and gave Himself for us. Nor may we (without presumption) rely on Christ's merits and death for our acquittal, unless, also, our sins die and be crucified also.

[1] II. Cor., vi., 21; I. Pet., ii., 24.
[2] Aug. Confess., l. 9, c. 6.

In a word, there is no security in any thing to any person, but in the points of hearty endeavour of leading a holy life, and in certain articles and instructions to determine our wills, and incline them to the obedience of Christ, as we are taught in that sum of our faith, *the Apostles' Creed.* All the rest is moral and fallible. This is the form of that sound doctrine which we are to rely on, and whatsoever else is plainly set down in Scriptures, and actually conveyed to us by perspicuous places, and separated (as to questions of necessary and non-necessary) by that comprehensive symbol. Other matters are impertinent pretences, proceeding from interests, superstition, and vanities of men, or mere conjectures and opinions, and no parts of necessary worship, nor distinct religion, but (as a worthy person calls them) sects, and fragments of Christianity.

Let us, therefore, search out the truth in the Divine Oracles; prepare ourselves by humble and devout prayer for a right understanding thereof, steadfastly practising such things as are plainly described and incontrovertibly contained in them; and expect illumination, answerable to the faculties which God has given us, that is, Reason, History, and human assistances and acquisitions, without which we shall be in danger of being led into dreams and fancies, and the world (as the same learned person [1] judiciously predicted) never be rid of religious lunacies, heresies, and enthusiasms.

In the mean time, (as we have often hinted) no man should be hated for his profession, because he has not

[1] Mr. Thorndike's Epilogue.

lighted on the same education, books, or conversation, which *we* have enjoyed, by God's peculiar and special Providence; but be thankful and humble, and pray for our erring and less illuminated brother. For, we may not persecute a doctrine by breaking a commandment, nay, all of them at once, by our uncharity. We should, therefore, be careful of being over-dogmatical in private opinions, especially, of adopting them into the family of faith. If we have found the foundation, which Christ and His Apostles laid, (for no other foundation can we lay, but what is trash and stubble) that is, what body and system of articles are simply necessary to salvation—such as they taught, and such as the Church of England tenders—we need go no farther for our religion; and what she teaches is what Catholic religion always taught—even an habitual Paradise of piety, justice, integrity, mercy, charity, humility, temperance, sobriety, continence and chastity, obedience and subjection, peace and unity, love and heavenly-mindedness, courage and constancy, and a generous contempt of this empty and fallacious world. This is the religion, and these the virtues, which, coming from God, came down from Heaven, and will carry us up to Him thither again.

Since, then, we believe there is a Supreme Being, wise, powerful, just, and superlatively good; that He has promulgated such a faith, designed such retributions, that upon every moment of our lives depends the eternal interest of our souls, that He with whom we have to do is no respecter of persons, and that, after this short

and umbratile life, we launch into the state which must for ever be our portion, how infinitely does it concern us, among such a number of pretences, to be circumspect in the choice of our religion, serious and sincere in our profession of it, knowing that our labour shall not be in vain! For He is faithful who has promised, and will be our guide and comfort unto death, and raise our corruptible bodies into incorruptible, immortal beings, freed from pain or want, fear or temptation, error or disorder, ignorance and imperfection; in serenity of mind, tranquillity of conscience, happiness indicible and not to be expressed, in the vision of that infinitely glorious God our Redeemer; where, conversing with angels and saints, we shall be filled with wisdom and knowledge, supernatural and intuitive, new discoveries, self-delight, and self-complacency; in a word, with the fruition of as mighty a happiness as the Divine beneficence, power, and wisdom can contrive, and our exalted nature is susceptible of, in the utmost and most exalted capacity, to all eternity. Oh, ravishing joy! oh, desirable state! oh, life worthy a thousand deaths to attain! whom have we in heaven but Thee? whom on earth that I desire in comparison of Thee? My soul thirsteth for Thee; my flesh also languishes after Thee. Oh! when shall I come and appear before the presence of my God? *Tunc, tunc satiabor, cùm apparuerit gloria tua.*

What, then, so noble and truly heroical, what so reasonable, as the Christian religion, restored to its primitive purity! which teaches the way to this happiness,

and even compels us to embrace it; a religion so adapted to the perfection of our nature, so adequate to our intellectual part, and, though full of mystery, yet not such as contradicts our reason, though they exceed it, and, by being most wonderful and stupendous, become the fitter to be believed to be the work of an Omnipotent Power. For such are the Incarnation, the Hypostatical Union, the Adorable Trinity, the Resurrection.

And, as to the miracles we have enumerated, we have asserted how openly they were wrought; the witnesses living when the things were written. St. Luke records the Acts of the Apostles, which he saw; St. John, what he both saw, touched, and heard of the Word of Life; St. Peter, the same. And by these were thousands converted, who only heard, though they did not see; and blessed are they who so believe. And who can disbelieve, considering the connexion of circumstances amounting (as we have shown) to a natural and infallible certainty? Add to these, the constancy and gallantry of so many thousands sealing their faith by their suffering for it. Nor fire, nor sword, nor loss, nor calamity, being able to shake their belief, even of the most tender and delicate virgins and little children, as well as matrons and old and feeble men, as well as the strong and vigorous, who were not terrified with shameful exposures, the teeth of wild beasts, and all the inventions of the most bloody tyrants.

Such assurance, such confidence, such constancy, such ardent love, possessing the hearts of such martyrs and confessors, never could have been, had not

some supernatural Divine Power assisted them from above — whatever else we meet with (and they but very few and inconsiderable) of the ancient Pagan devoted bravery, or the later Vanini, Spinosa, and other Atheists, proceeding from glory, pride of reason, spite, and stupidity, without any farther prospect or rational end. For without this there could be no true felicity, seeing all past things vanish like mists, and even princes and cruel usurpers, who kill and destroy others unjustly, are continually dogged with fears and jealousies, and are in perpetual danger; and the rich and great in favour are continually exposed to the vicissitudes of fortune, fire, water, treachery; that is, to the uncertainties of worldly prosperity, as God sees expedient, which renders them miserable, stripped of these deceitful circumstances; so that nothing is certain, nothing stable, nothing that entirely can fill and satiate the soul and capacity of the meanest beggar, so as to acquiesce, and be incapable of receiving more, but the truth of God and His holy religion, the fruition to come in Him, who fills heaven and earth, and is fulness itself.

Of this, besides the Holy Scriptures, we have the testimonies of the Asian Churches planted by the Apostles and their successors, the constant series of bishops, priests, sacraments, symbols, and creeds, preaching the same doctrine. We have their assemblies on the Lord's Day for public worship; the apologies of learned men, from time to time, against Pagans, Infidels, and miracles asserting the Christian truth. We have histories, sermons, comments, disputes, confes-

sions, (yea, and that even of our adversaries) martyrs, councils, synods, conventions, canons, laws, decrees, and sanctions of Christian princes and emperors; and, above all, the purity of its precepts, so agreeable to the impressions even of nature itself; without images or statues, or erecting temples to include or confine the Deity (as the false religion had), whose temple is the universe, and our hearts the altar, our prayers and praises the sacrifice and incense most grateful to Him whom we adore.

Nor believe we only, for these outward manifestations, His works, which are ever before us, but because we feel Him operate and work within us, by the efficacy of His word and sacraments, producing those saving graces which lead to eternal life. Nor has Almighty God, the Author of all, imposed any difficulty in our way, but what a meek and subacted Christian may rationally resign to, and competently understand, by diligent and humble application, and with ordinary means. All that is necessary is (as we have shown) plain and easy in our faith. She requires no implicit belief, no contradiction and impossibilities, countenances no presumption, lays no stress on things uncertain, or impertinent human inventions and busy nothings; but makes her votaries devout, not superstitious; holy, not self-conceited; modest and serious, not garish and theatrical; but is solid and material, steady and infinitely satisfactory. We are satisfied in the Divine goodness and candour in interpreting the actions and methods of our wise and great Creator; and, being conscious of our

own sincerity in keeping close to the rules of Scripture, where it is plain, think ourselves at liberty where it is silent, and humbly take direction of spiritual guides where obscure or doubtful; and so go cheerfully on our way.

And thus we have seen nature, prudence, society, conscience, our own hearts, Scripture, antiquity, universal consent, every object we behold and feel, convince us of the most important truths,—the aspectable world, its goodly frame, Providence and its economy, the course of the celestial bodies, revolutions, seasons, instincts of animals, structure of our own bodies, and the utter impossibility that every part and atom of nature should so concur to the assertion of a Deity, and leave any scruple to infidelity and unbelief.

He, then, who is of no religion is, of all religious men false or true, the most foolish, the most inexcusable, and most miserable, because, whatever may happen to the other, he is certain to miscarry; and better therefore were it uncertainly to err than certainly to perish. But, having the true religion before us, we are doubly to be blamed if we neglect it; for be we ever so zealous in our profession, if it be not truth we profess, piety requires more than merely good nature, inclination, and meaning well—namely, the knowledge and the culture of the truth, for the improvement of our lives. Nor does God so much regard what is well intended, according to our fancies, as what Himself commands and expects for so mighty a reward. Let those, then, take heed, who have substituted so many new devices

into worship, not only no where prescribed, but every where forbidden.

If, then, the right eye of external pomp offend, pluck it out; if the right hand of secular interest, cut it off and cast it from thee. And let us use all diligence to make our calling and election sure, though with fear and trembling. Let us strive to enter the strait gate, and contend for the sacred truth once delivered. It is highly worth the pain, the cost, and all we have to purchase, a pearl of price, a crown immarcessible, and which fadeth not away.

The consideration of our immortal souls and future state should make us value ourselves more than to think we were made only to eat, and drink, and sleep, and sport a few years, and drown ourselves in pleasures, which perish in their using. These will soon have an end, and then all our thoughts perish. Wherefore, he who intends to be a true Christian should awaken his courage, stir up his industry, and be always cultivating his graces—prepare that noble particle so nearly related to the Divine Nature, and subdue and vanquish his sensual and ignoble inclinations. And the thought of living for ever should keep him from being fond of the present, and teach us to look down with a godly and generous contempt on the vanities of this life. We belong to another country, to another prince, to quite another state, where our Blessed Lord, the Author and Finisher of our faith, and the religion we profess, is the Light that illustrates the centre of all events, the interpretation of all the Mosaical rites and ceremonies, (which

had been most extravagant, without relation to our Messiah) the foundation of all virtue, which would have no force or sufficient motive, but upon account of that immortality and glory revealed by Him,—the basis of the most inviolable sentiments of conscience, which were else but error and illusion, were our religion false.

The resplendent character of that wisdom we see diffused through the whole creation—the consummation of all our hopes; for, if our faith be not true, we are of all creatures the most miserable—the centre of all the certainty and evidence of our knowledge; for what is certain, if our souls, being only a concourse of atoms, without that immortal spirituality our religion teaches? since it would require another contingency and set of particles to frame the first notions quite repugnant to those we have. In a word, without the True Religion, which teaches us to know ourselves, and has revealed life and immortality, there is no more salvation for reason than for our conscience.

To conclude, then, and wind up all: let us establish it in and [make it] possess ourselves—that the end of man is the end and scope of our most holy religion; and the end of our religion, the end and sovereign good of man. All that is in man seeks it; the insatiable curiosity of our souls, continually aspiring to new objects, asks and inquires after it; and then our most holy faith reveals, and, because it reveals, Almighty God to us, it reveals all we can desire. The infinite avidity of our spirits is unsatisfied with all we see and can enjoy here; and therefore is impatient for that alone which alone can

bestow it. It was never before understood or conceived that, to replenish the vast void of our hearts, we should accomplish it by glorifying God, by resigning, renouncing, removing ourselves from ourselves, and give all to God.

These, I say, are paradoxes, only verified in the Christian religion, supplying the defects of our nature, to establish the Religion of Nature.

Consider but what we have said in this Treatise; and you must acknowledge that, not our imagination, which forms the natural religion, assures us of its truth—not the Mosaical revelation—not the very heart and interior of the natural man—but with, and above all these, the moral of Christ, His doctrine, His end, effects — the Testament produced, and rendered incontestable by so many Divine characters and matters of fact, which oracles declared, prophets announced, miracles confirmed, martyrs sealed, time has continued, the whole world has embraced; which is the light of our senses, the eye of our reason. All we hear, and see, and feel, and taste of the Word of Life, asserts its Divine origin. Encompassed, then, with such a cloud of witnesses, what shall we say, but that it is the very finger of God—the work of the Great, and Wise, and Most Holy God, manifested in Christ, who is God, blessed for ever! To Whom be glory, praise, and thanksgiving, for ever and ever! *Amen!*

APPENDIX.

A.

Baptism in private channels is inconvenient, unless in case of necessity. It would seem as if we were ashamed of our Christian profession; and there is not a more essential way to destroy all public solemnities of worship. All baptisms, in the primitive times, were most public in rivers and ponds, as that of our blessed Saviour by John the Baptist. And the Emperor Constantine the Great (though disappointed) intended to have been baptized in Jordan. Afterwards, they built fonts near the churches, then in their porches, and at last in the churches, never allowing any private baptisms, save in cases of necessity and danger of death.

The contrary custom was introduced by the late sectaries, and upon connivance, and to avoid the ceremony of the cross and sponsors. Others adopted it for state and delicacy; and in our fanatic state of civil war, when not only all ceremonies, but indeed all sacraments were, in a manner, abolished; so that, in many places, people were necessitated to get it done privately; and it has thence obtained, to the scandal of religion; the infant being to be publicly owned and received into Christ's congregation, and by its susceptors and undertakers solemnly undertaking to see it educated like a Christian, and for edification of the persons present.

Godfathers, in our Church, speak, by way of substitution, in the infant's stead, promising to do their endeavours to initiate the child, and procure him an early interest, till he know his own duty; which is a great act of charity.

Exorcism was used before baptism, when a Heathen or Pagan was made a proselyte; because they were to renounce the worship of devils, or false gods, from which they came.

It is not of the necessity of the means that infants are in danger, dying unbaptized; but the wilful neglect, despising, or profaning the ordinance. God does not annex his grace of necessity to the element, which may not, perhaps, be always in our power.

We also argue, from the Covenant of Grace, to which Christ has admitted infants: *I am thy God and the God of thy* seed *after thee.*[1] To you *and* to your children *are the promises made.*[2] Whence we say: those who have part in the Covenant of Grace ought also to receive the seal of that Covenant and Sacrament, which is the *Symbolum* of the alliance. Now, not only all the Faithful have share of the Covenant, but their children also. Therefore, not only the Faithful, but also their children, ought to participate of the seal, &c. *Therefore, repent,* says the Apostle, *and be every one of you baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sin* (observe); *for to you* and to your children *are the promises made.*

Again:—To whomsoever pertains the reason of the Command, to him belongs the Command itself. Now, to the children of the Faithful pertains the reason of the Command of being baptized. *Ergo,* the first proposition is infallibly true; the second proved by St. Peter (as before), as if he had said, All to whom the promise of God in Christ is made ought to be baptized; but this promise is to children; therefore, they ought to be baptized. Now that they have part in the Covenant,[3] St. Paul, speaking of holiness and consecration, made by virtue of the Covenant and alliance, says, That the unbelieving or infidel husband is *sanctified in the believing or Christian wife; otherwise were* your children *polluted, but now are* your children *holy.*

Moreover, those who are consecrated, or saints of God, ought to receive the mark or seal of their sanctity, &c.; but the children of the Faithful are saints and consecrated to God, and therefore ought to receive it.

For so our blessed Saviour[4]—*For to such belongs the kingdom of Heaven.*

Again:—Christ on earth was pleased graciously to receive little infants, rebuking those who would have kept them back. And doubtless, now He is ascended to heaven, He will not take it ill, that they are presented and consecrated to Him in baptism. In

[1] Gen., xvii. 7.
[2] Acts, ii., 38, 39.
[3] 1. Cor., vii., 14.
[4] Matt., xix., 14.

augmenting His glory, shall we think He has diminished His love?

Again:—To whomsoever appertains the thing signified, the figure appertains likewise as the crown to the king, though born an infant king. And to little children belongs the kingdom even of heaven. Therefore, to them belong the crown and badge.[1] *Go*, teach all nations, *baptizing them*, &c. Now, the word *nations* comprehends all ages and sexes whatsoever, wherein all are not capable of teaching, but are all of baptizing. We have many famous instances of whole families being baptized in Scripture: *Lydia* and all her household; the *Gaoler* and his family;[2] Stephanus and all his domestics.[3] Is it credible so many families should be without children? Besides, children were circumcised on the eighth day. Why not a Sacrament for Christian children as well as for the Jews? Christ came not to lessen the favours of God, but to increase them. Therefore, all who were to be circumcised under the first Covenant ought to be baptized under the second, by a parity of reason. Nor did our Saviour come to destroy, but to alter the Sacraments from carnal and gross to spiritual and refined. Had not baptism succeeded circumcision, neither had any Sacrament among the Christians succeeded to that of circumcision; and so should the Synagogue have received more privilege and grace than the Church of Christ. See the antitype! *You are* (says St. Paul) *circumcised with a circumcision* made without hands, &c.[4]

Objectum: Baptism is the seal of faith in Christ, and infants, being incapable of faith, are incapable of the seal also, since the seal belongs but to those to whom the thing sealed belongs.

Responsum: Circumcision was also the seal of the righteousness of faith.[5] Now, as in the person of Abraham, who was circumcised in his old age, the circumcision was the seal of faith already formed in his heart; but in the person of Isaac, circumcised the eighth day, it was the seal of the faith which should be in him, in his time: so, in respect of the Faithful, baptism is the seal of the faith which shall or ought to be forgotten in them, when they arrive to competent age. Now, if it be demanded why we admit not children as well to the holy Eucharist, since the Jews did theirs to the Passover, we affirm the Jews did not so, till their children were of capacity to

[1] Matt., xxviii. [2] Acts, xvi., 32. [3] I. Cor., i., 66.
[4] Coloss., ii., 11. [5] Rom. iv., 11.

ask them the meaning of it, and so do we ours, so soon as they have the dispositions required expressly by the apostle.[1]

B.—Episcopacy and Church-Government.

When our blessed Saviour promised to be with his apostles to the end of the world, it could not be understood of their persons who were to die long before, but of their successors, and that so far as is necessary to the present state of the Church.

The government of the Church is but its external garment, the diversity of which affects not its essence. For at first it was governed by bishops, priests, and deacons, successors to the apostles, and not by any *one* as spiritual head above other bishops, though one had place above another, in regard of the capital or imperial city and chief province, who was called *Metropolitan*. All which were but prerogatives of honour and civil dignity only, without any sort of other dependence as to Divine matters; every bishop being, in his own diocese, the centre of the communion of those Christians within it, and to whom they had recourse for advice and appeals upon all occasions; and that without breaking communion with other churches under other bishops, but observing the same faith and divine worship, with all love and charity; although in matters not essential, and of necessary belief, they sometimes dissented, as in communicating of infants; holding no vision of God before the Resurrection; that all should pass through a great fire at the last day; that Christ should reign on earth a thousand years before the last resurrection, &c. And yet for all these differences and improbabilities, and which lasted to the sixth century, churches did not separate, much less damn and anathematize one another. And therefore, when Pope Victor excommunicated those who did not celebrate Easter as he did, it was despised, and he reproved for it by Irenæus.[2] Nor indeed read we of any separation upon such disputes and things indifferent, till Arius denied the Divinity of Christ, and Macedonius that of the Holy Ghost—Eutyches and Pelagius, who confounded the two natures, attributing that to nature which we have by grace alone.

These and the like incompatible heresies and errors first brake the union; and so, since that, have the Reformed separated from that Church, which holds things destructive to the faith and worship

[1] I. Cor. xi., 27. [2] See Euseb. Hist. Eccles., l. v., 24.

of God, exercising other empire over men's consciences than that of Jesus Christ; which destroys all unity with such as cause the separation, not those who separate.

Our blessed Saviour's Institution was, first, that of the *Apostles;* secondly, of the *Seventy;* which both were over the people in things which concerned God; but which two were subordinate and not equal. Nor does it appear anywhere that the apostles ordained any equality afterwards in the clergy; and, if there be no superiority in the clergy, then can no man perish in the gainsaying of Corah, under the Gospel, as St. Jude affirms they may. For his rebellion was, because he might not be equal with Aaron, appointed his superior by God. It seems St. Paul did command Silas and Timotheus;[1] which sure was a mark of superiority. Bishops then succeeded the Twelve, and, in place of the Seventy, the presbyters, priests, or ministers.[2] And so it was ever thought, till of very late. For, now they will have another regiment in the Church, of lay elders, pastors, and doctors, and whether of deacons, too, is not fully resolved on. As for I. Cor., xii., 28, they pass it by, because there is no mention of *pastor;* and Ephesians, iv., 11, for that, no *lay-elder;* and therefore lay it on Romans, xii., 7, 8, where, by an unheard-of exposition, they find them all four; but not if any ancient writer may be heard; there being no Epistle, upon which so many of them have written—Origen, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Ambrose, &c. See their Comment on the places, and you will not find one of them applied to that Church government, or any of those offices, in those words out of Timothy.[3] They think to fetch their lay-elders, by implication, because there is mention of presbyters in labour, not in preaching.[4]

St. Chrysostom, on the first of Corinthians, i., xvii., hath another sense of the matter: *Evangelizare* (says he) *perpaucorum est; baptizare autem cujuslibet, modo fungatur sacerdotio, et siquidem Presbyteris, qui simpliciores sunt, hoc munus tradimus, ut baptizent: Verbum autem ut doceant, non nisi sapientioribus.* By which it is evident, that in his time it was not thought meet that every one who ministered the Sacraments should also preach. *Quamobrem* (also says the same Father) *qui bene præsunt presby-*

[1] Acts, xvii., 15.

[2] Irenæus, l. iii., c. 3; Tertull. *De Præscr.*, v. 5; St. Augustine, in 44 Psal.

[3] V. 17.

[4] I. Cor., i., 17.

eri, duplici honore digni Sunt, maxime qui laborant in verbo. The meaner sort dealt in baptism, the wiser in the Word; but as for lay-elders not one word; nor were there any such, in all antiquity, ever understood by the name of Presbyters.

THE END.

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